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SEVEN GREAT RELIGIONS

ANNIE BESANT

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BY

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Four convention lectures delivered in 1896 by Mrs. Annie Besant on Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and Christianity on the twenty-first anniversary of the Theosophical Society, Madras, India, were published as *Four Great Religions* in 1897. The Foreword was added when the lectures were printed together in January 1897.

A second series of four convention lectures on Islam, Jainism, Sikhism and Theosophy or Divine Wisdom as the common source of all religions, was given in 1901 at the twenty-sixth anniversary.

In the 1966 Edition, both the series of convention lectures, with the exception of the lecture on Theosophy, were re-arranged and published as *Seven Great Religions*. A bibliography of book titles was added.

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FOREWORD TO FOUR GREAT RELIGIONS

THE following lectures do not pretend to be anything more than popular expositions of four great faiths, and are intended for the ordinary reader rather than for the student. Delivered to audiences composed almost entirely of Hindus, with only a sprinkling of Zoroastrians and Christians, they rather take for granted a knowledge of Sanskrit terms; so notes have been added where obscurity might arise from their use. They are intended to help members of each of the four religions to recognize the value and beauty of the three faiths which are not their own, and demonstrate their underlying unity. In the lecture on Buddhism I had especially in mind the misconceptions which shut the Lord Buddha out from the hearts of his countrymen, and strove to remove them by quotations from the received scriptures containing the authoritative records of his own words. For indeed I know of no greater service that could be rendered to religion than to draw together again these sundered faiths, which almost divide between them the Eastern world. Mother and daughter they are, and family feuds are proverbially bitter; yet might the quarrel be healed, if the desire for amity reigned on both sides. Less deeply rooted, but more bitter, was the antagonism to Christianity, exasperated by the ignorant and often coarse and abusive attacks levelled by the lower class of missionaries against the venerable faith held by nearly all my hearers. Yet they listened respectfully and after a while sympathetically to the exposition of the faith so young in comparison with their own, and finally recognized that it also was a great religion, and was not really alien from Hinduism. I can wish these lectures no better fate than that they may act as a message of peace to the hearts of their readers, as they evidently did to the hearts of their hearers.

The general principles underlying these lectures are the following: Each religion is looked at in the light of occult knowledge, both as regards its history and its teachings. While not despising the conclusions arrived at by the patient and admirable work of European scholars, I have unhesitatingly flung them aside where they conflict with important facts preserved in occult history, whether in those imperishable records where all the past is still to be found in living pictures, or in ancient documents carefully stored up by Initiates and not wholly inaccessible. Especially is this the case with regard to the ages of Hinduism and Zoroastrianism, touching which modern scholarship is ludicrously astray. That scholarship, however, will regard the occult view as being, in its turn, grotesquely wrong. Be it so. Occultism can wait to be justified by discoveries, as so many of its much-ridiculed statements as to antiquity have already been; the earth is a faithful guardian, and as the archæologist uncovers the cities buried in her bosom many an unexpected witness will be found to justify the antiquity that is claimed.

Secondly, each religion is treated as coming from the one great Brotherhood, which is the steward and custodian of spiritual knowledge. Each is treated as an expression, by some member or messenger of that Brotherhood, of the eternal spiritual truths, an expression suited to the needs of the time at which it was made, and of the dawning civilization that it was intended to mould and to guide in its evolution. Each religion has its own mission in the world, is suited to the nations to whom it is given, and to the type of civilization it is to permeate, bringing it into line with the general evolution of the human family. The failure to see this leads to unjust criticism, for an ideally perfect religion would not be suitable to imperfect and partially evolved men, and environment must always be considered by the Wise when they plant a new slip of the ancient tree of Wisdom.

Thirdly, an attempt is made to distinguish the essential from the non-essential in each religion, and to treat chiefly the former. For every religion in the course of time suffers from accretions due to ignorance, not to wisdom, to blindness, not to vision. Within the brief compass of these lectures, it was not possible to distinguish in detail, nor to point out all the numerous non-essentials. But the following tests may be used by any one who desires to guide himself practically in discriminating between the permanent and the transitory elements in any religion. Is it ancient, to be found in the ancient Scriptures? Has it the authority of the Founder of the religion, or of the Sages to whom the formulation of the particular religion is due? Is it universal, found under some form in all religions? As regards spiritual truths, any one of these tests is sufficient. As to smaller matters, matters of rites and ceremonies, observances and customs, the use or disuse of any particular practice, we may ask as to each: Is it laid down or recommended in the ancient scriptures, by the Founder or his immediate disciples? Can its usefulness be explained or verified by those in whom occult training has developed the inner faculties which make the invisible world a region they know by their own experience? If a custom be of modern growth, with only a century, or two or three centuries, behind it, if it be local, not found in any ancient scripture, nor justified by occult knowledge, then—however helpful it may be found by any individual in his spiritual life—it should not be imposed on any member of a particular religion as binding on him as a part of that religion, nor should a man be looked at askance for non-compliance with it. This fact especially needs enforcement in India, where customs that are entirely local, or very modern, are apt to be identified with Hinduism in the minds of their followers, and any Hindus who do not accept them are looked upon as somewhat inferior, even as unorthodox. Such customs, even if much valued and found useful by their adherents, should not be considered as generally binding, and should fall into the class of non-essentials. It has been well said that while in things essential there should be unity, in things non-essential there should be liberty, and in all things there should be charity. Were that wise rule followed by each, we should hear less of the religious antagonisms and sectarian disputes that bring shame on the very word "religion." That which ought to unite has been the ever-springing source of division, until many have impatiently shaken off all religion as being man's worst enemy, the introducer everywhere of strife and hatred.

May this little book, sent out with reverence for all religions that purify man's life, elevate his emotions, and comfort him in sorrow, be a message of peace, and not a stirring-up of strife; for I have striven to sketch each religion in its best, its purest, and most occult form, and each as though I belonged to it and were preaching it as my own. To the Theosophist "nothing that is human is foreign," and he has only reverent sympathy for every expression of man's longing after God. He seeks to understand all, to convert none, and in offering to share the knowledge with which he has been entrusted, he hopes to deepen every man's faith by adding to his faith knowledge, and by unveiling the common foundation which supports all religions.

Owing to pressure of time many quotations, supporting the positions taken, were either summarized or omitted in the spoken lectures. They have been inserted in their proper places, together with a few points that were in the original notes but were also omitted for lack of time.

ANNIE BESANT

ADYAR
January 3rd, 1897

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HINDUISM

A CONVENTION LECTURE

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HINDUISM

NEVER, my brothers, since I have stood on the platform in order to put forth thoughts on religion and on philosophy, have I felt the difficulty of the task that is undertaken more than I feel it on this occasion. The mere fact of dealing with the great religions, each compressed into a single lecture, is by itself enough to appal the most audacious of speakers; and when you consider that with the feelings of your hearers these religious matters are intimately bound up, that one is going down to the very roots of the human heart, that in taking faith after faith one is dealing with those matters which ought to have united men, but as a matter of fact have very largely divided them, then you may appreciate the hesitation that I feel in trying in any sense to grapple with a task so great. A religion can only be understood by sympathy; a religion can only be expounded by the speaker placing himself, for the time being, in the heart of that religion and showing it forth as it would appear to its most devoted and learned adherents; and this I am to try to do with one of those great religions that have moulded the civilizations of men; that have coloured the thoughts and comforted the hearts of the vast majority of the human race.

The first of the great religions with which I am to deal is that known sometimes under the name of Hinduism, sometimes under the name of Brāhmanism, a religion which is the religion of the majority in this country and which had its cradle in the northern part of this land. Let me begin by reminding you that this race, the Āryan race, is the fifth in the course of human evolution, and that in the case of this race, as in the case of the one that went before it, a definite plan was followed in its formation, and its training. From the flower of the fourth race that preceded it, at a time so distant that modern science would only jeer at it if given, families were chosen out by the Manu to form the forthcoming race, were separated from the earlier humanity, segregated and placed apart, and, for an immense period of time, trained, guided, and educated under the immediate direction of the Manu and the great Initiates who surrounded Him to help Him in His mighty task. Thus the characteristics of the new race were impressed on the flower of the old.

When that early task was over, the race was planted in what we may call its cradle land. In this way the Āryan race was formed, was trained and had its own characteristics implanted in it; the first family of its stock, from which others were later to spring—that which in modern times we speak of as Hindu but that always in the early days was called Āryan—was settled in the North of India in the district known as Āryāvarta, and there gradually evolved along definite lines laid down for it by its Manu and by the Initiates who surrounded Him. In this case we find that the model for the whole race is definitely imprinted on its first family; that which ought to be perfectly reproduced is here perfectly expressed, and the perfection of the expression is due to those on whom this early impression is made. For, looking backward in the light of occult knowledge on those beginnings, we find that the souls that were incarnated in this beginning of the Āryan race were souls of many different types. The Manu at the head of all, the ruler and the legislator; then the Initiates round Him, the teachers and guides of the people—the Rishis of ancient India; below them a large number of souls coming into incarnation, who had already attained a high stage of moral, intellectual and spiritual development in previous worlds; below them younger souls, who had still much evolution behind them; and lastly a number of souls who had had a very brief time of evolution comparatively speaking, who had passed through the fourth race and were the most successful members of that great division of humanity. So that you had a very various people, a people who could well take the impress of an all-embracing religion, philosophy, science, and polity, and serve as a model, handing down to their more untrained successors who should follow them this example of what an Āryan, a fifth race nation, ought to be. It was fitted to be the custodian of the polity, of the philosophy, of the sciences, of the exoteric religion, and so mark out once for all what ought to be the typical development of the Āryan race.

Now we find as we study the religion given to this ancient people, that it includes a training for the whole nature of man at the various stages of his evolution, and that it guides him not only in his spiritual and intellectual life, but also in all his relations with his fellowmen in the life of the nation and of the family. The whole civilization is religious, and there is nothing in human life regarded as "secular" or as "profane". The things which are looked on by other peoples as outside the scope of religion are the very things as to which Hinduism has always most rigidly demanded orthodoxy. The intellect has been encouraged to exert itself freely, as witness all the schools of thought, comprised under the all-embracing "Hinduism"; but right conduct as it affects the social fabric has ever been rigidly enforced. Freedom of opinion, but orthodoxy in life, these have been characteristic of Hinduism ✓ throughout its long evolution: hence the vast range and diversity of its philosophies, and the stability of its social fabric and its family life. Hence too it has been looked on as the most burdensome of religions, for most people care much for liberty of action and little (except theoretically) for liberty of thought. A Hindu may think as he will about God—as one with the universe, separate from the universe, or may even exclude Him entirely.

Our subject falls naturally into three divisions: (1) the spiritual truths, with their later intellectual presentations; these are given in the Vedas and in the Upanishads which are an integral portion of them. We have in the Vedas a complete presentment of spiritual ✓ truth, not fully expressed but implicitly contained, so that it is written that Brahman is concealed in the Upanishads as the Upanishads are concealed in the Vedas. Gradually this was to be expressed in the course of evolution; a perfect whole was given to be unfolded as time went on.

This was the higher Vidyā,[1] the knowledge of Brahman, and the lesser *vidyā* was comprised in the Vedāngas,[2] the sixty-four sciences which codified the knowledge of nature, and the methods of gaining knowledge, a mine of gold from which might now be digged out scientific lore that would set the modern world a-wondering.

Then comes (2) the exoteric cult, detailed and wonderfully minute in its delineation of nature and of man's relation thereto, with the Purānas as its popular expression, with the ordinances linking it to the outer social and family conduct. Later on, we find book after book, like the *Rāmāyanā*, and the *Mahābhārata*, and in much later times there are fresh expressions of their truths in some of the dramas, such as those of Kālidāsa. Here for the people at large, for the mass of the population, there are the outer teachings which are gradually to train them to the understanding of the hidden and spiritual truths.

You will never understand Hinduism unless you realize that it was a system given by occultists, by Rishis, to whom the invisible world was a matter of knowledge; that it was intended to train the people gradually into a knowledge of it, by their following of a system based on the facts of the invisible. You must realize this foundation of the religion, and then you can trace it out in all its varying parts. Then you will understand why, as already said, the intellect has always been left free, bounded only by the Vedas, left free to infer from the Vedas whatever it might logically deduce from their many-faced and profound wisdom,

[1] Knowledge.

[2] Literally "limbs of the Vedas".

while outer conduct was so rigidly guarded. By a man's thoughts a man evolves, and the thoughts of others are powerful factors in the evolution of each; the more varied they are, the more openings do they make through which the sun of truth can shine. Varieties of opinion about God are valuable, not mischievous, because each opinion by itself expresses so small a fragment of the mighty truth, and the totality of opinions gives a fuller presentation than could otherwise be gained. But conduct covers all man's relations to external nature, visible and invisible, and according to his conduct harmony or discord accrues.

The exoteric cult was intended to make a harmonious concord between man and his surroundings, and was imposed by authority, because the people were not capable of assimilating the knowledge on which it was based. In their later evolution when knowledge was acquired by Yoga, the outer obligations fell away, for harmony then needed no authority for its production; the man, united to the law, became a law unto himself. Here comes in (3) the Science of Yoga[1] by which alone spiritual truths can be fully realized by the gradual unfolding of the inner faculties which enable man to study the invisible world directly, by the expansion of his consciousness to embrace wider and subtler ranges of being. The truths given in the Vedas were to be realized by Yoga, but its methods are nowhere fully stated, and to this end was the Guru instituted, that he might teach the worthy pupil to tread this difficult path, sharp as the edge of a razor.

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[1] Union with the Self.

We shall take these three divisions in order. First, we shall look at the spiritual truths which are expressed in the Vedas, with the aspects of these expounded in the systems of philosophy, partial because intellectual, complementary not antagonistic, not one of them expressing the whole of the truth, but each expressing as much as the intellect is able to put logically together under a single system. Then we shall study the exoteric cult in its principles, in its details, showing the bearing of the whole on the social and family life. Lastly we shall realize that a true knowledge of spiritual truths can only be obtained by Yoga, that there is a science of the soul which is taught by the Guru, and which enables a man, step by step, to rise to the highest spiritual wisdom. You see how vast an area of ground we have to cover; you see how, in so short a time, we have to traverse this vast field of study; and you will pardon me if, in passing swiftly from point to point, I leave much detail utterly unexpressed, because I am speaking with the tongue, not by mind to mind, and am limited by that illusion of time under which all our intellectual processes here must be carried on.

I begin with a brief exposition of the fundamental, spiritual and philosophical truths on which the whole of Hinduism is based, the understanding of which perfectly means that man has reached his goal. Let us glance at the beginning of the universe, the commencement of manifestation, when Brahman, the Self of the universe, manifests Himself in order that the universe may be. It is written: "When He is manifest, all is manifested after Him; by His manifestation this all becomes manifest."[1] How He comes into manifestation we know not, but we are told that it is by an act of sacrifice: "Om! the dawn in truth is the head of the sacrificial horse."[2] Occult wisdom teaches that this act of sacrifice is the Self-limitation of Brahman, His circumscribing of Himself by *māyā*, i.e. by *avidyā*.[3] Without this no universe could be manifest, since limitation is necessary to variety, and each thing is enveloped in *avidyā*, that is, is limited, is shut out from being all else, from being perfect knowledge. With Brahman the manifested universe begins; He is the Source, the Fount, the one Self, and the one Breath of the universe; outside Him is nothing that is manifest, outside Him there is no life, no thought, no mind; manifesting in His threefold attribute, He is Sat, Cit, Ānanda, and from Him all qualities come forth. He enfolds these in one, the First, the Cause of all. That Brahman, that mighty One, the Self of the universe, is described in a passage of wonderful beauty and sublimity in the *Svetāshvataropanishad*, and I choose this because in a shloka quickly following after this description the hint of something beyond even the manifested Brahman is given. You may remember the passage, which I must needs translate into the less poetical, less beautiful, and less perfect language which I am obliged to employ; but even in the modern tongue the marvellous beauty of the original shines forth: "When there is no darkness, neither day nor night, neither being nor non-being, there is Shiva, even alone. He is indestructible. He is to be adored by Sāvitrī. From Him alone comes forth the ancient wisdom. Not above, nor below, nor in the midst can He be comprehended, nor is there any similitude for Him whose name is infinite glory. Not by the sight is established His form: none beholds Him by the eye. Those who know Him by the heart and the mind, dwelling in the heart, become immortal."[1] Such is the description of Brahman, the manifested, the Cause of the universe. Two shlokas follow, and then the succeeding chapter opens with the declaration that in Para Brahman, the supreme Brahman, "*Vidyā* and *avidyā* exist unmanifest."[2] Or, we may translate "Īshvara and *māyā*[3] exist unmanifest." What that means we know not, what that would signify we cannot say. No human faculties may cognize the unconditioned; no human tongue can express THAT which is beyond this all. Only we know that all comes forth from THAT; THAT is everything though no words implying difference—and all words imply difference—may describe THAT; in THAT Sat, Cit and Ānanda have their root in unity, the One without a second; in THAT Unknown and Unknowable, all is, but is in a way we cannot understand. For to us existence means difference, and in THAT difference there is none.

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[1] *Mundakopanishad*, 2. 2. 10.

[2] *Brihadāraṇyakopanisad*, 1.1.1.

[3] *Māyā* is illusion, all that is changing, transitory, in contrast to the permanent Reality, the One Life. Therefore it is the root of matter, matter being that which takes form and adapts itself to the impulses of the life it clothes. *Avidyā*, absence of knowledge, is another name for it.

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[1] Op. cit., 4.18, 19, 20.

[2] ibid., 5.1.

[3] Īshvara the Lord, Brahman as the source of the universe and its guiding power. *Māyā* see *ante*.

Then coming to the manifested universe, where some knowledge is possible to us, we learn that the manifestation of Brahman is gradual and not sudden, and that all comes forth from Him not at once but slowly; from the concealed gradually comes forth the manifest, from the hidden comes forth the revealed. Phrase after phrase is used to show you that everything comes forth from and is Himself, but that He is hidden beneath the phenomena, beneath Name and Form. As salt in the water in which it is dissolved,[1] as fire in the wood before the fire-sticks are rubbed together, as butter in the milk that is brought forth by churning,[2] as cream in clarified butter,[3] so is Brahman concealed as the Self of every creature. Stage after stage the marvels of His manifestation; stage by stage the might of His unfolding; His quality of Sat, of pure existence, comes forth in the unmoving creation, in the mineral kingdom as we call it, where existence only can be said to be shown; Cit and Ānanda are there concealed, and only Sat is manifest. Then in the vegetable world the unfolding life shows us the beginning of pleasure and pain, the germ which develops into Ānanda in the later stages of evolution; and in the animal world there is shown forth also the germ of Cit, which is to have its later and fuller evolution; and in man the germs are all partially manifested of Sat, Cit and Ānanda until at the end of the evolution Sat, Cit and Ānanda are perfectly developed in him. Then he is Brahman, he has become one.

[1] *Chāndogyopanishad*, 6. 14.
[2] *Svetāshvataropanishad*, 1. 16.
[3] ibid., 4. 16.

All this is wrought out by the slow course of evolution, by birth after birth, by death after death, by that wheel of births and deaths which turns unceasingly in the three worlds. The lowest world, the world of our waking consciousness, is Bhūr-loka; there man is born in the physical body, there he gathers experience by coming into contact with material objects; then through the gateway of death he passes into the next world, Bhuvar-loka and in a body suited to that world he works out a part of the experience made upon the earth; then in a third body, ascending to Svarga-loka, he works out the fruits of others of his earthly experiences.[1] From Svarga-loka he returns again through Bhuvar-loka to the gateway of birth, to Bhūr-loka, there to begin again his learning, the fruits of which he assimilates in the other worlds. Thus ordinary human evolution is in the three worlds —as we are constantly told.

To this wheel man is bound by desire, by the thirst for sentient existence, which in his ignorance he identifies at first with the life of the body. "This Purusha [inner man] has the nature of desire. As is his desire so is his resolve; as is his resolve so is his work; as is his work, so is his reward . . . He who is attached obtains by means of work the object to which his mind, as the cause, is attached. Having arrived at the last (effect) [in Svarga] of the work which he here performs, he comes from that world again to this world in consequence of work. Thus he who desires [wanders from world to world] . . . When all desires dwelling in the heart have been abandoned, then the mortal becomes immortal."[1] Ceasing to identify himself with the body, he identifies himself with the mind, and then merely lives for a longer time in Svarga, still bound by desire. Freedom from rebirth only comes when desire is dead for anything the three worlds have to give.

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[1] This Earth; Kāma-loka (Astral); Devachan.

Next, all this evolution proceeds under the law of causation, each cause working out its due effect. This is the law of Karma, that returns to every man exactly the results of his sowing. He sows his Karma in the world of matter, of physical matter, he reaps it partially in the other two worlds and there assimilates the results of his thinking; then he returns to earth, the creature of his own making, to work out Karma belonging to this earth; so he grows life after life, being "a creature of reflection; what he reflects on in this life he becomes the same hereafter."[2] In this way he climbs from stage to stage with ever-expanding consciousness, sheath after sheath developing within him, and each one a vehicle of consciousness. As he develops, he expands his consciousness to embrace one world after another—the stages of consciousness corresponding to those three worlds being the stages of Jāgrat, Svapna and Sushupti.[3]

[1] *Brihadāranyakopanishad*, 4. 4. 5-7.

[2] *Chāndogyopanishad*, 3. 14. 1.

[3] Consciousness is a unit, but it may work in the Jāgrat state, i.e. in the physical body, in Bhūr-loka; in the Svapna state, i.e. in the astral body, in Bhuvar-loka; or in the Sushupti state, i.e. in the mental body, in Svarga-loka. Hence Jāgrat is called the waking-consciousness; Svapna the dream-consciousness; and Sushupti the dreamless-sleep consciousness. The English names are misleading unless the facts are understood.

Consciousness expands, embracing each world in turn, until man is the master and sovereign where at first he was the child and the student. Then rising yet higher, he escapes from the wheel of births and deaths; he passes from the body of the moon,[1] as it is technically called, into the body of the sun,[2] and when this is completely mastered he comes back no more to enforced birth. Rising to the Turīya state he attains the Self, clad only in the Ānandamaya-kosha.[3] Having definitely unified his consciousness to that point, he is beyond the three worlds and their revolving wheel. He can pass into, expand into, the Nirvānic consciousness, the all-embracing, the divine. Jīvātman—thrown forth at first in the uttermost ignorance, enveloped in *avidyā* with all its powers germinal, in latency not in activity—is enwrapped in sheath after sheath of matter in order that, through the sheaths, it may come into contact with all the regions of the universe, that in each it may, by these contacts, bring forth into manifestation the powers belonging to that region at first latent in itself, until at last all the powers are developed, the sheaths are purified, *avidyā* is transcended, and man knows that the Self of the universe and his own self are one; he finds his goal, he becomes Brahman; that which he ever was potentially he becomes actively and in realization.

Such, roughly sketched, are the essentials of that mighty philosophy of Hinduism by which man is taught something of the spiritual truths that underlie evolution. All this will be done by humanity life after life. But what all men will do in the course of countless ages, a man may do, if he will, by greater effort, by intenser exertion, by means of that science of Yoga which trains the soul more swiftly than the ordinary evolution. Evolution is but the will of Īshvara showing itself in the manifested universe; borne on the bosom of evolution, humanity is carried onward to its goal. But the strong swimmer may reach the goal more swiftly than a floating straw; by Yoga a man may finish his journey while yet the mass of humanity are floating slowly along with the current of evolution. This we shall see in the third division of our subject.

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[1] The astral and lower mental bodies.

[2] The higher mental and causal bodies.

[3] The buddhic or bliss-body.

Attempts to bring down this wonderful thought to the region of intellect have given birth to the six great schools of Indian Philosophy, with all their countless modifications. We descend from the spiritual region into the intellectual, from that world where all is clear to the purified vision into the world where limitations have their way—and language is the worst limitation of all, yet every philosopher must write, must express himself, in articulate form. Yet how shall the Unspeakable be uttered, how shall Brahman be put in intellectual terms? One mark is common to all the schools and may be said to be written above their portals: "Until a man is able to roll up the ākāsha like leather, there will be no end of misery except by the knowledge of God."[1] Every school of Hindu philosophy seeks liberation, liberation from the limits of painful existence, from the miseries of birth and death. All admit that the divine knowledge, Brahma-vidyā, is wanted for the escape, but they differ in the way they express their goal, in the methods they severally employ to reach it.

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[1] *Svetāshvataropanishad*, 6. 20.

Let us take them for a moment one by one—it is all I can do—just that you may realize the vast work intellect has done in trying to expound spiritual truths. They fall readily into three pairs, characterized by their fundamental view of the universe and by their way of proof. First we have those founded on the atomic theory, the two schools known as the Nyāya of Gautama and the Vaisheshika of Kanāda, which have also very much in common in their methods of research. They seek knowledge by way of inference, by logical process, dividing everything into categories, considering the nature of proof, the nature of inference, the very essence as it were of the mind, worked out in fullest details, based on the atomic theory and developed along the lines of pure reason. They remain as monuments of pure intellection, remarkable not only for the perfection with which the reasoning is conducted, but also for the training they give to the human mind; the nature of things is sought into, and in order that error may be avoided there is the keenest analysis of the tools by which that investigation is to be made.

Then you come to the two schools which are built on the duality of the manifested universe, on the co-eternity in it of the two fundamentals, never disjoined, ever interworking, a cosmogony of the most logical coherence being worked out in linked succession. These are the Sāmkhya of Kapila, sometimes called the atheistic Sāmkhya, because it does not go behind the dual manifestation, and the Yoga of Patanjali, or the theistic Sāmkhya. In the first, the fundamental duality of the manifested universe is the starting point. Purusha, Spirit, or rather the multitude of individual Purushas, is regarded as eternal, and Prakriti, matter, is regarded as co-eternal with them. Prakriti is threefold, showing Sattva, Rajas and Tamas as its three gunas[1] and is full of activities, but it is aimless and can do nothing save as clothing Purusha. Hence the favourite simile, that Purusha is like a lame man with effective eyes carried on the shoulders of a blind man with effective legs; the two together can walk and avoid stumbling into pitfalls.

Then follows the working out of the whole manifested universe, under the heads of 25 *tattvas* or principles, as we may call them, deduced with keen insight, with logical precision, with the most careful observation of facts, so that, taken as a cosmogony limited to the manifested universe, the Sāmkhya may be said ever to hold its own. The Yoga of Patanjali accepts the Sāmkhya cosmogony as it stands. but adds to it the twenty-sixth *tattva*, Īshvara, the deity to be worshipped. For Patanjali truly said that without a form the mind could not concentrate itself in meditation, and he sought knowledge not by investigation into the universe along the Sāmkhyan lines, but by the suppression of the modifications of the thinking principle; those modifications were regarded as the barrier between the thinker and the One that he sought; only when the mind was one-pointed could man escape from this limitation.

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[1] Rhythm (Serenity), Mobility (Activity), and Inertia, as its three qualities.

Lastly, we have the two great Mīmāmsā schools, the Pūrva Mīmāmsā and the Uttara Mīmāmsā. In the first, the system of Jaimini, we have rites, ceremonies, all that is the outer part of a man's religious life, dealt with and expounded with the utmost minuteness. The Uttara Mīmāmsā is the Vedānta, the best known perhaps in the West of these six great Indian schools. This is divided into three sub-schools, the Dvaita, Vishishtādvaita and the Advaita. They accept the Sāmkhya cosmogony, as to the course of the evolution of the manifested universe, but are not satisfied to stop where the Sāmkhya stops. The Vedānta—the "end of the Veda"—seeks the cause of the manifested universe, cannot rest content with an analysis that stops at Purusha and Prakriti. It is, in fact, the most splendid and philosophical expression of that ineradicable yearning of the human heart for God, which may be denied, distorted, thwarted, but ever rises from its seeming death, the eternal witness of something in man that is his innermost Self, his inalienable life, and that finds its noblest outcome in the triumph-cry of the Advaitin: "I am He!" when the long-sought under many veils is found, and Deity stands revealed as the very Self of man.

The three sub-schools of the Vedānta should be regarded as successive steps, rather than as antagonistic theories; all assert the Divine existence as the source of the universe, but the Dvaita teaching alleges an eternal division between God and man—they remain eternally distinct. The Vishishtādvaita goes a step further, asserting duality but merging it into a final unity. The Advaita insists on the fundamental unity, and is so intent on this that—dazzled by the darkness that is "excess of light"—it well-nigh loses sight of the universe, seeing only the One under the illusive forms. But when from intellectual disquisition he rises into devotion, the Advaita Vedāntin also recognizes the manifestations of Brahman in the Gods, and where can we find such fervid overmastering intensity of rapt devotion as in the stotras to Shiva and to Durgā of that chief of Advaita Vedāntins, Srī Shamkarācārya?

In the Advaita is the familiar teaching as to *māyā*, the illusion-causing power of Divine Thought—the universe but the thought of the One without a second. All but Brahman is illusion, for it is limited, it is transient, it is ever-changing; the One that is permanent is the only Reality; all that changes is illusory, the manifestation is but a thought. Perhaps that idea, difficult to grasp, may be made clearer if we remember that the human mind can also by its thought impose illusions on another mind that is under its control. When a man is hypnotized he can be made to feel the resistance of a body, to see it, to hear it, to touch it and smell it, to have every record of senses by which we guide our outer life complete, and yet there is nothing there but the thought of the hypnotizer, who is imposing all these sensations directly on the mind. The moment the man is dehypnotized the illusion vanishes, and he knows nothing is there. Similarly, in this view, the universe is but God's thought expressed and dominating the whole—all forms are but thoughts of God; and when that is once realized, the One is seen and the separation and the difference disappear. Sheath after sheath of Avidyā is stripped from off the Self; sheath after sheath is pierced through by the eye of wisdom, until the seer declares that: "In the highest golden sheath is spotless, partless Brahman. THAT, the true light of lights, known to the knowers of the Self."[1] Or yet man has known it, he wanders about in the universe of forms, but that which really attracts him in every form is not the phenomenal appearance but the Self which shines within it.

We love forms because the Self is in them; we are attracted by forms because a broken ray of the light of the Self shines through. As the child sees the pebble shining on the road after rain, and goes to pick up the shining stone, attracted not by the dull bit of earth but by the light of the sun which is reflected from it, so do all men—aye! even in their vices—deluded by outer appearance, follow but the broken light of the Self. That is what they are groping after, and in their blindness they fail to understand, they do not realize. All persons too are loved for the Self within them. "Not for the sake of the wife, the wife is dear but for the sake of the Self the wife is dear; not for the sake of the husband is the husband dear, but for the sake of the Self is the husband dear;" and so on with one thing after another in the manifested universe, until at last we say: "Not for the sake of the Gods the Gods are dear, but for the sake of the Self the Gods are dear."[2] Thus Man rises from stage to stage, ever coming nearer to the

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[1] *Mundakopanishad*, 2. 2. 9.

[2] *Brihadāranyakopanishad*, 4. 5. 6.

Self; thus it is that first he realizes division—"I am I, Thou art Thou, Thou art to be adored, Thou art to be worshipped, I am Thy Bhakta, Thy devotee." Coming nearer and nearer to the Vision of light, there comes a dawning sense of likeness, the lover and the beloved cannot be really twain; until at last, with love made perfect and wisdom no longer stained by ignorance, the lover and the beloved merge in one: "I am He!" and there is unity where duality had reigned.

From this you may probably see why it was that in the old days the teaching of the Vedānta was not given to the world at large. The path of the unmanifested, says Srī Krishna, "is hard for the embodied to reach."[1] Through the embodied we rise to the unembodied, through forms to the formless. Therefore Srī Shamkarācārya laid it down as a preparation for learning the Advaita that the man should evolve in himself certain qualifications, and until those were evolved the Advaita was never taught. How wise and necessary this restriction, we can appreciate, who see the evil use to which this noble teaching is put today by men with senses uncontrolled and minds untrained.

We now pass from those great philosophic systems dealt with so terribly baldly, to the exoteric cult, which was intended to train, to evolve, to educate the soul, until rising from step to step it was ready to pass into the hands of the Guru and receive its final initiations.

The first thing that strikes us in the exoteric religion is its all-embracing character, its infinitely varied adaptations to the infinitely varied needs of man. And this, because it presents the external universe from the occult standpoint, and because that universe at every point touches each soul at the successive stages of its long evolution. For the very poorest, the lowest, the meanest, the most ignorant, there was something in the faith; for the highest, the most intellectual, the most spiritually advanced, there was still teaching in Hinduism. That is one of its distinguishing characteristics, that it has teaching for the most ignorant and for the most wise, embracing them all within the same fold of religion.

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[1] *Bhagavad-gītā*, 12. 5.

The exoteric cult was based on a knowledge of nature—occult knowledge; not the knowledge that science obtains by studying phenomena, that is, the outer appearances; but the knowledge that springs from studying the inner life, that is, the mind of which the outer phenomena are the expressions. There you have the fundamental difference between occult and physical science. The one looks at the outer appearance, the other looks at the life which is manifesting itself through the form. Based then, on facts of the invisible world, the whole teaching of it is the expression of invisible nature, of nature not as matter and energy but as living intelligences, not a "blind" or "dead" matter and unconscious force, but as living consciousnesses expressing themselves through matter and through energy. Their life is really the energy, consciousness being of the essence of life; forms are matter veiling the life, matter taking shape from the living consciousness within it.

On this profound truth that there is nothing in the universe that is not living, and that all forms are the expressions in denser or subtler matter of the thoughts of living intelligences, the exoteric cult of Hinduism is based. It was intended, as before said, to bring man, however ignorant he might be, into harmony with his visible and invisible environment; it taught him to use rites, ceremonies, formulae (mantras), every one of which was designed to produce definite results in the invisible world; to preserve unbroken the inter-dependent links of elemental, mineral, vegetable, animal, human, lives; to keep turning in harmonious rhythm the wheel of life in the three worlds, supporting in mutual service the minerals, vegetables, animals and men of the physical world, the Devatās of the astral world, the Devas of the mind-world, establishing that system of reciprocal sacrifice to which Srī Krishna alluded when He said: "With this nourish ye the Gods, and may the Gods nourish you; thus nourishing one another ye shall reap the supremest good. For, nourished by sacrifice, the Gods shall bestow on you the enjoyments you desire."[1] That which the occultist does by knowledge and by will power, ignorant men were taught to do in their little measure by rites and ceremonies, so contributing their small share to the general harmonious working of the whole.

The Sat-Cit-Ānanda of the philosopher, of the spiritual mystic, is expressed in the concrete form of the Trimūrti[2]—Brahmā, Vishnu, Shiva. There we have in concrete forms adapted for worship the threefold Brahman who is the Cause of the universe; His three aspects shown in their separate manifestation, in order that they may be understood a little better by the limited intelligences of men. The creative aspect is shown forth in Brahmā, by whose *tapas*. or meditation, all things are produced; He expresses the universal mind, the divine Cit. The life which is in everything, the life which permeates, which sustains, the infinite support, the foundation of the universe, that without which the universe could not be maintained, which is present in everything, in every atom of that universe, is Vishnu, the All-Pervader, the sustaining life of God; He, the dual, is the aspect of Ānanda, of Bliss. And then more hidden and mysterious in many ways, He who is sometimes called the Destroyer but is rather the Regenerator, He who is living Fire, the Lord of the burning ground, whose fire comes down to burn up every form when its usefulness is over, in order to liberate the life that is within the form, that it may take higher expression and fuller manifestation—He, Mahādeva, Maheshvara, is Sat, Existence. .Such is the great Trimūrti, the concrete aspects of the manifested God. Then coming downwards from the Trimūrti we have the seven great "elements," each of which is the form-aspect of a mighty Intelligence, a God, of whom five only are at present manifest and two concealed. These five are Ākāsha, the form animated by Indra; Agni, fire, the form of Agni; Vāyu, air, the form of Pavana; Ap, water, that of Varuna; Pṛithvī, earth, that of Kshiti (Kubera).

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[1] *Bhagavad-gītā*, 3. 11, 12.

[2] Three images, the Trinity.

You will never understand the wonderful perfection of the Hindu faith unless you can realize something of the life-side of the universe. These Gods of the elements—Indra, Agni, Pavana, Varuna and Kshiti—these are real entities, great spiritual Intelligences, and each one of them has his own region; each one of them is Lord and sovereign Ruler of that particular element which is the expression of his nature, and below him there are countless hosts of Devas and Devatās in ever-descending order, until you come down to the lowest manifestations of all on the physical plane, the lowest Devatās of Hinduism, who have to do with the absolute forming and building of the physical bodies of our physical world. Also you have to understand that while there are seven regions in the universe[1] —of which we are concerned with five only—each one consisting of modifications of the element which is its root-material, each of these regions has also its seven sub-divisions, and these sub-divisions severally show the characteristics of the great regions. Borrowing an illustration from our revered teacher, H. P. Blavatsky, I may compare the seven regions of the universe to the seven colours of the solar spectrum; then imagine that, taking one colour, say violet, this is analyzed into seven again, and is found to consist of violet-red, violet-orange, violet-yellow, violet-green, violet-blue, violet-indigo, violet-violet; each colour of the spectrum there, but dominated by the violet shade; there you have an admirable picture of the way in which each God has His own region, and yet the other Gods are represented in it by modifications of the element of the ruling God, each sub-division being characterized by the attributes of one of the others. If, for instance, you take Fire, Agni is the ruling God, and is Fire in every region of the universe

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[1] The seven planes of the Theosophist.

—electric fire, all flashings of light, light in the highest heaven as in lowest earth. These all come under his rule, are modes of his being, and condition it according to the region where the manifestation takes place, down to the physical fire that burns on the hearth, whose Devatās are animated by his life. Therefore Agni, the mighty, the self-shining, ruling in the fiery region, is yet chanted in the *Sāma Veda* as "The Lord of the Homestead," for the household fire is also his, and through it he works.

Then we come to men's relations with them; men's relations with the ascending hierarchies, going right up to the Trimūrti; these are set forth in order, with the rites, the ceremonies and the religious duties connected with each at every stage; according to a man's intellectual and spiritual evolution is the grade of Deity to whom his worship should be paid. For those who are just awakening to the consciousness of mind and are feeling the first faint stirrings of devotion, some very simple form of God is given; otherwise they can understand nothing of what is meant by the very word "God". Hinduism gives them a concreate form, a concrete form of an exceedingly narrow kind at first; else it would only daze the dawning intellect, and confuse the dull feeling of devotion which otherwise might gradually develop. Would you talk to the labourer in his field, who knows nothing but his seed, his crops, his cattle, his hopes of rainfall and sunshine, his wife and his children—would you talk to him of the spotless, partless Brahman who is known to the knower of the Self? If you do he will stare at you blankly; you give him no object towards which his love can go out, towards which his devotion can find its way, round which the tiny tendrils of his heart can twine themselves, at present so weak and able to grasp so little. When a tender plant is shooting, you do not bring an enormous rock to that plant, expecting it to twine round it with its baby tendrils; but you take a slender twig, which is not too large for the tendril to twine around, by which the plant climbs, grows upwards and by its aid becomes stronger and ever more able to grow.

So, in the exoteric religion of Hinduism, the aspect presented of God is proportional to the ability of the worshipper—always a little above him, always a little higher than he is, always such as to draw out some feeling of love, of devotion, and of homage, and all that really goes to the One, no matter under what aspect that One may be seen. "A leaf, a flower, water, a fruit"[1] offered with pure heart, with sincere devotion, is accepted by Srī Krishna Himself as though offered unto Him. For "even devotees of other Gods who worship, full of faith, they also worship Me, O son of Kuntī, though contrary to the ancient rule;"[2] much more than they who worship the lower Gods according to that ancient rule. And why not, since there is nothing "moving or unmoving, that may exist bereft of Me,"[3] and therefore the Lord is in the stone or the tree, and He is worshipped, and not the mere outer form.

[1] *Bhagavad-gītā*, 9. 26.
[2] Ibid., 9. 2.
[3] Ibid., 10. 39.

So is it, step by step, that the worshipper is led upwards as by a loving mother's hand. And if you want to have in a single scene the necessity for this limitation, go to the eleventh chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, where Arjuna, not knowing what he asks, prays to see Srī Krishna as the Lord of the Universe and not in His more limited form. Srī Krishna grants his prayer, gives him the divine eye, since the eye of flesh cannot see God. And then He shines forth in splendour, like thousand suns shining at once in the heavens, filling height and depth, stretching from east to west, from north to south, everything within His form—the Gods, men, and all, within one divine image of intolerable glory. Arjuna is startled, is terrified, is shaken, is confused, is crushed. He cries out finally in his human longing: "This Thy forth-streaming life bewilders me . . . Again I fain would see Thee as before; put on again Thy four-armed shape, O Lord."[1] Arjuna's experience is a universal one.. While we grow, God must narrow Himself to our limited knowledge, otherwise we shall never learn to know Him at all. You cannot pour into a vessel more than the vessel can contain; the liquid only overflows on every side; and the great Ocean of Brahman cannot flow in its entirety into these tiny vessels that we present for its reception; only as the vessel expands can more and more of that illimitable Self pour itself thereinto.

So then we have in Hinduism rites, ceremonies, observances, images, countless forms of worship adapted to the countless types of human knowledge and of human ignorance. But they are all adapted to draw out love; they are all adapted to stimulate devotion; they are all adapted to bring about worship; because it is this attitude of the soul that is important, and not the intellectual form in which the worship is couched. By these means men gradually rise to the one supreme image of Him who is the Lord of the Universe; they rise to the conception of Īshvara, the one Lord above all. And by this means are they prevented from dragging down the sublime conception of the one God to the low levels of their early ignorance, making the Lord of the universe the image of human passions, moving within human limitations. They are constantly reminded that they do not know God as He is, but only a little ray of Him, as much as they have capacity to receive. And as they grow, they realize with delight that more of Him flows into the conception of Him that they adore, expanding it, illuminating it, subliming it, till it seems to yield some vision of His glory. Rising to Īshvara, they may worship Him as Vishnu, or in any of Vishnu's Avatāras. They may worship Him as Shiva, the Great Yogin, the Lord of Wisdom. Then they have reached the conception of the One which underlies the many in manifestation.

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[1] *Bhagavad-gītā*, 11. 31, 46.

Now we must see all this was worked out in the individual life of the soul, looked at externally in the stages of its evolution through the three worlds; by the individual life I mean the whole life of the soul, from the time it began its experience as a human soul, i.e. from the formation of the Kārana Sharīra,[1] to the time when it reaches

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[1] The causal body, lasting throughout the human cycle.

Brahman and is a perfect reflection of the divine. Hinduism divides that individual life into four great stages, represented by the fourfold order of castes. You have there the evolution, stage after stage, of the individual soul. In Hinduism, as the model polity for the Āryan race, it was made part of the social fabric of the nation, but wherever the soul may be evolved it has to pass through the four stages, in inner realities though not in outer births. Hinduism was made to represent the inner growth in outer form, that men might learn spiritual truths by seeing the external pictures. Let us glance at them in succession, seeing what the soul was meant to learn in each, and how the environment was adapted to the advancing evolution.

The lowest stage was that of the shudra, where there was little obligation save the duty of obedience and service. The next stage was that of the Vaishya, where wealth was permitted, its gathering was encouraged, and the soul had to learn unselfishness in the possession of wealth; the rightful use of wealth in service is the lesson of the caste. Then the third stage was trodden, that of the Kshattriya, where life itself was to be held as sacrifice, and not only material goods. And finally comes the caste of the Brāhmana, wherein nothing that is transitory should have power to attract, and wherein the soul is dwelling in its last body upon earth. And beyond the four castes, when these have been lived through and their lessons learned, stands the Samnyāsin, who has no caste, nor uses rites, nor ceremonies, nor fires, nor possesses anything that belongs to the passing existence—the

Samnyāsin of the heart, not only of the cloth. So thoroughly is he apart from personality that men in greeting him say only, "Namo Nārāyanāya," praising the God in him instead of greeting the outer form. The spiritual teaching, under the exoteric expression, gave rise to this fourfold order.

Next, we must glance at the personal life, i.e. the life that is led in the three worlds through one personal life-cycle, one period in each world. There again the life varies according to the stage reached by the individual, that is, by his stage in the whole life of the soul. In the early stage he will have the simple life of the senses with a little of the lower mind, and will spend considerable time in Bhuvar-loka and a brief time in Svarga-loka. As he advances intellectually, the stay in Bhuvar-loka will shorten, and that in Svarga-loka will lengthen, his desires being of a nature to find fruition chiefly in the higher world. Let us take a case of yet higher order to show the earthly life in its highest stage before actual Yoga is practised, lived so as to minimize life in Bhuvar-loka, and to extend the bliss of Svarga-loka.

The personal life on earth is divided into four stages, or āshramas. First, the life of the student, where he has, as it were, to rehearse in the new body all the virtues he had to learn in his past evolution when he belonged to the Shudra caste—obedience, discipline, reverence, chastity, industry, duty to those above him, these are the expressions of the life required from the Hindu student—the first stage of this personal life. Then comes the second stage, the stage of the married home, of the man as citizen, as husband, as father of a family, discharging his duties alike to the state and to the home. This is the second or gṛhastha stage, the school of unselfish virtue, penetrated through and through with religion. He must perform the five daily sacrifices, the sacrifices to the Gods, to the Pitris, to the Rishis, to men, and to animals—treading the round of daily duty of unselfish charity. Thus were all debts paid to the invisible and the visible, and the daily obligations of every kind discharged. There were further special ceremonies marking every family event, ceremonies connected with the anti-natal life of a child, ceremonies at birth, ceremonies at marriage, ceremonies at death, ceremonies after death, following the soul onwards into the invisible world—all these laid down as the spiritual fabric within which the soul was to develop. The noblest ideal of married life ever given to the world is found in Hinduism, of husband and wife drawn together by spiritual affinity rather than by fleshly desire, and joined in the bonds of an indissoluble marriage, joined for spiritual development, for spiritual growth; the man unable to perform many of the religious ceremonies without the wife, the wife being the shishyā, the pupil of the husband, who was guru as well as spouse. See the life led within the family, the beautiful relationship of sons to father, of sons to mother, of brothers to sisters, and so on; all laid down with care and discrimination, always with the eye fixed on the one idea—to develop the dawning quality of spiritual love in man. Then the insistence on moral virtues, the constant holding up in the great literature, familiar in every household, of the very noblest ideals, ideals in which men lived the common life of men and were yet patterns of noblest virtue, expressing the very loftiest purity and righteousness of life.

Is there any literature that gives to the training of the young heart nobler examples to follow in every department of human life? Could your daughters have better examples, say of wifely love, than in Sītā and Sāvitrī? Could they have nobler inspiration to win knowledge than the examples of Gārgī and Maitreyī? Where will you find grander types of humanity, perfect in all the different circumstances of life? If you take patterns of virtue, can you find a nobler trio anywhere than the three brothers, Rāma, Lakshmana and Bharata? Can you find brotherly devotion, brotherly love, brotherly service anywhere more exquisitely delineated? Can you find more fervent love between husband and wife than that between Rāma and Sītā? Can you find nobler example of exquisite balance of mind, of patience, of serenity, than in the exiled ruler Yudhishthira? Can you find anywhere duty more perfectly incarnated than in Bhīshma, lying on his bed of arrows and pouring out divinest wisdom to the younger lives who gathered round him?

Thus was the soul trained by precept and example, thus stage by stage was the soul led on in daily practice. Then follow the last two stages of life, when the family duties were fulfilled—life in the forest, husband and wife carrying with them the household fire which had been lighted at the time of their marriage, and leading there a life of peaceful contemplation away from the world, leaving full-grown sons behind them to carry on the duties of the state and the home; and then the final stage of the recluse, of the ascetic, where the soul was left face to face with Brahman. Such was the life, orderly and progressive, self-restrained and dignified, by which the soul was trained and developed until the time came when there were open before it the three paths, or Mārgas, the practice of Yoga commencing in the two later stages of the preceding lives.

We have arrived at the third division of our subject—the science of Yoga, the way by which a man may hasten his evolution, expand his consciousness, and rise into union with the Supreme. Yoga was the final stage of an evolution patiently trodden with ever-increasing recognition of the goal, from the worship of the lower Devatās[1] through the four āshramas, up to the direct training for the liberation of the soul from the wheel of births and deaths.

As just said, three are the paths, and each has its own Yoga: Karma-Mārga, the final stage of which is Karma-Yoga; Jnāna-Mārga, ending with Jnāna-Yoga; Bhakti-Mārga, ending in Bhakti-Yoga.[2] For all, the subdual of senses and the control of the mind are essential prerequisites, but the methods to accomplish this differ with the paths.

In the Karma-Mārga a man learns by constant practice in daily life; in the home he practises restraint of the senses, is self-denying, self-sacrificing; he gains control of the mind by his daily meditation, by accuracy and diligence in his business, by utilizing the constant opportunities of maintaining concentration and balance amid the distractions and in the whirl of the common life of men. When by lives of such effort he has prepared himself, he begins the Karma-Yoga, by which he learns to perform action as duty, without desire for fruit, "renouncing the fruits of action," as it is called. He performs every duty with scrupulous fidelity, but he looks for no fruit from it, he renounces all results. Finally he performs every action as sacrifice to the Supreme, his only motive, the doing of the will of Ishvara. By this, though living in the world, he has no attachments, and is at heart the unattached, the wanderer. By this, he builds his "hut" and has his solitary place for meditation. By this, he realizes the pure "I" and its unity with other "I's" and is the Hamsa. By this, he rises above the "I" and becomes the Parama-hamsa.[1] By renunciation and sacrifice, Ahamkāra[2] is destroyed, and with its destruction the blinding veils fall away from his eyes, and he is filled with Jnāna and Bhakti, for the end of the three paths is one.

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[1] Lower Gods, including the astral entities who are busied with the processes of nature on the two lowest planes.

[2] The path of action; the path of wisdom; the path of devotion. Yoga, or union with the Self, may be practised and attained by any one of these three ways.

For the Jnāna-Mārga a man develops his intellect by study pursued through many lives, till he has reached a point at which he begins to weary of mere knowledge, and seeks the permanent truth, of which all knowledges are the broken gleams. Then he must develop *viveka*, discrimination between the real and the unreal; *vairāgya*, disgust for the unreal; *shat-sampatti*, the six mental qualifications—*shama*, control of the mind; *dama*, control of the body; *uparati*, wide-minded tolerance; *titiksha*, endurance; *shraddhā*, faith; *samādhāna*, balance; he must have *mumuksha*, the longing for liberation from the transitory; and then, with all these, he is the Adhikārin, the man fitted to receive initiation into Yoga.[1] Then he follows the Jnāna-Yoga, and discerning the valuelessness of the transitory, he becomes the Parivrājaka, the wanderer, unattached by desire, the homeless man. By yet deeper vision, he realizes the permanent, and rests on that as his secure foundation, so becoming the Kutīcaka, the dweller in the hut, abiding in that one secure resting-place. Then he feels the self-consciousness clearly, realizes the "I," and sees the same "I" in others, the Hamsa stage. Rising above it, as the spiritual vision is clarified and consciousness expands, he becomes the Parama-hamsa, beyond the "I," and realizes "I am He."

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[1] These stages are described below in the Jnāna-Mārga.

[2] The quality of I-ness, separateness.

Bhakti-Mārga is trodden by the soul whose affections are drawn towards some manifested aspect of God, and its early stages are those of devoted worship, of deep love and reverence. Gradually the soul takes on the qualities it worships, becoming that which it adores. The non-attachment gained by renunciation in Karma-Mārga, by discrimination in Jnāna-Mārga, it gains by expelling all lower attachment by the one attachment to its Lord; by love it conquers all baser desires, and they wither for lack of expression. Sacrifice is a joyful acting out of devotion; each of the four stages is trodden, with love, in each case, as the active means of accomplishment, until the love that worshipped finds the object of its worship embracing it, and feels itself merging into complete unity with its Beloved.

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[1] These were the qualifications demanded by Srī Shamkarācārya ere a man was allowed to study his Vedānta, for the Vedānta cannot be realized without Yoga.

In truth the three paths blend, and in the higher stages you cannot separate the one from the other; for the Karma-Yogin is full of Bhakti, and also by his sacrifice destroys Ahamkāra and thus becomes perfect in wisdom. The Jnānin and the Bhakta each take on the qualities of the other. In the heart of the Bhakta wisdom arises spontaneously, and in the heart of the Jnānin, Bhakti flowers as the inevitable result of vision.

In the later stages of each path, so soon as his services are needed, the Guru appears, and takes the soul under his own guidance; the man becomes a *Shishya*, a chelā.[1] He comes not to the unprepared, the unready, though the impatience of man often cries out for his presence when that presence would be unheeded were it there. He leads the soul through the later stages, giving such adjusting aid as is required, helping it to unfold its own capacities, the divine potentialities within it, thus hastening its evolution until achievement is reached. Then the chelā, in his turn, becomes the liberated soul, ready and fit to help onwards the less advanced. He becomes the Jīvanmukta,[2] living in the body still, to be a link between humanity physical and humanity spiritual, a channel of divine love and strength to man. Or he may become the Videhamukta,[3] living in the invisible world, still yielding service to the One, still carrying out the divine purpose, serving in other ways as a channel of spiritual life to men. These mighty Ones pay their debts to their own Gurus by service of the present and of the future Shishyas, just as they received their own illumination from Gurus developed in the past. Thus universe succeeds universe, each aiding its successors until our thought fails to express itself, and the human faculty sinks down unable to soar further.

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[1] A disciple, or pupil.

[2] The liberated soul.

[3] The liberated bodiless one.

Such briefly, most imperfectly expressed, such is the religion founded in immemorial antiquity, that has come down from the Rishis. Such ought to be your religion, heirs of the past, descendants of those mighty Ones![1] Just in so far as you live it, in so far are you really their heirs. Just in so far as this is dear to you and practised by you, are you learning the lesson of evolution as it was taught by them, and given to the people they instructed; just so far are you profiting by opportunities greater than those offered to any other nation, opportunities that, wasted, will be bewailed by you under less favourable conditions in many a life to come.

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[1] This lecture was delivered to an audience consisting mainly of Hindus.

ZOROASTRIANISM

A CONVENTION LECTURE

ZOROASTRIANISM

ONE of the differences which are continually arising between occult knowledge and the Oriental science which has of late years been growing up in the West, is the question of the age of the great religions. When we come to Buddhism and to Christianity the difference is limited to the question of a century or two. But with regard both to Hinduism and Zoroastrianism, there is an entire conflict between Orientalism and occultism—a clash which does not seem likely to cease: for most certainly the occultists will not change their position, and the Orientalists, on the other hand, are likely only to be driven backward stage by stage with the unveiling of ancient cities, with the discovery of ancient monuments. And this is a slow process. Hinduism and Zoroastrianism go back into what history would call "the night of time," Hinduism being the more ancient, and Zoroastrianism the second religion in the evolution of the Āryan race.

I propose to look at the changes of opinion through which Orientalists have passed, in order to show you how they are gradually being forced backwards, disputing, we may say, every inch of the ground, century after century, as the growing evidence points to an ever greater antiquity. Then I will take up the occult testimony, and see where that places the religion of the Iranian Prophet.

Some writers, we find, on glancing over their works, place this prophet—called Zoroaster sometimes, and more lately Zarathushtra—as late as 610 B.C. That would make him about contemporary with the Buddha and with Plato—a position resting on Muhammadan authority, and, if ever seriously entertained by European Orientalists, now at least entirely renounced. Dr. L. H. Mills—looked upon as one of the greatest European authorities, who made the standard translation of the Gāthās and published with it the various other authoritative translations—in dealing with this question of antiquity relies on the evidence of language, a point on which I shall have something to say a little later. He says that the Gāthās are written in a tongue which is evidently related to the Vaidik Sanskrit, the Gāthās being "long after the oldest Riks."[1] Now the *Rig-Veda* is put by him at the preposterously late date of only 4,000 years before Christ; and basing himself on that date he puts the Gāthās at 1000 B.C., and possibly as far back as 1500 B.C. So that we have got from 610 B.C. to 1000 B.C. or even 1500 B.C. as our first backward step. But Dr. Mills says that they may be much older—as, in truth, they are. In his later work, writing in 1890, he says: "I have ceased to resist the conviction that the latter limit [1500 B.C.] may be put further back. If they antedate the worship of Mithra . . . there is no telling how old they may be. The decision of criticism is to refrain from conjectures too closely limiting their age."[1]

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[1] *Zendāvesta*, Introduction, p. 37, Sacr. Bks. of the East, 31.

Then we come to the view taken by the German savant, Dr. Martin Haug, and we find that he contends for a greater antiquity, basing himself on the destruction of the library of Persepolis by Alexander, in 329 B.C. He argues that, in order that such a vast library, such a mass of literature, should have been gathered together, you must assume a greater antiquity, to give the mere time necessary for the writing and the gathering of the books. The writing was completed, he thinks, about 400 B.C. It is not possible, he says, at the very latest, to put the time of Zoroaster after 1000 B.C., and he regards 2800 B.C., as a more likely date, while he may be very much older.[2] Dr. Haug further remarks: "Under no circumstances can we assign him a later date than 1000 B.C., and one may even find reasons for placing his era much earlier and making him a contemporary of Moses. Pliny, who compares both Moses and Zoroaster, whom he calls inventors of two different kinds of magic rites, goes much farther and states that Zoroaster lived several thousand years before Moses."[3]

So we are gradually getting backwards, from 610 B.C. to 1500 B.C., from 1500 B.C. to 2800 B.C., and possibly very much earlier may be the first proclamation of the famous truths by the Prophet. Greek testimony, however, which is available—and it is valuable as being much more ancient than the views of our modern Orientalists—throws the date, once more, very much further back. Aristotle, for instance, places the date of the Prophet at 9600 B.C., putting it 6,000 years before the time of Plato, and we may say generally that this is the view which is taken by the Greek historians. Somewhere about 9,000 years before the Christian era would be the date assigned by them to the teachings of the Prophet.[1]

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[1] *A Study of the Five Zarathushtrian* (*Zoroastrian*) *Gāthās*, with Pahlavi translation. Naryosangh's Sanskrit Text and the Persian text translated, and a commentary. Introduction, pp. xix, xx.

[2] *Essays on the Pārsis*, by Dr. Martin Haug, Trūb.'s Oriental Series, p. 136.

[3] Ibid, p. 299.

The discoveries now being made by European Archæologists are very much helping the contention which pushes the beginnings of the religion further and further back; for inasmuch as we have to connect this Zarathushtrian tradition with the tradition of Chaldea, with the tradition of Nineveh, and of Babylonia, the late researches in those districts throw some light upon the question. You may remember that only a month or two ago in *Lucifer*, in a comment on an article by H. P. Blavatsky, I mentioned some of the very latest discoveries which are being made in the country over which this religion once ruled unchallenged. We find there the history of that land, preserved in cuneiform writing, traced back to at least 7,000 years before Christ, and probably, the discoverer says, to 8000 B.C. This cuneiform writing is now under process of translation, and it is possible that when that translation is published, evidence, which even European science will accept, may be available, corroborative of the antiquity of the religion of Zoroaster.

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[1] *Essays on the Pārsis*, p. 298.

Occultism, in any case, throws the beginnings of his teachings far far back, age after age behind all these dates. Occultists have two kinds of records on which they rely. First, the great Brotherhood has preserved the ancient writings—the writings themselves, taken away at the time when they were written; these writings are stored in underground temples, underground libraries, where no enemy can find them and where no injury can touch them. There, millennium after millennium, the knowledge of the world is gathered in its written form, and there are people who have been permitted to set eyes on many of these ancient writings—writings, the very knowledge of which has passed from the world of profane history, writings in the ancient sacerdotal language, different from anything which the most ancient of the races now knows. That is not the only record on which the occultist depends: he depends also on those imperishable records written, as we sometimes say, in the Ākāsha itself; meaning by that that there is a subtle medium which, to use a physical analogy, records like a sensitive plate every event that happens, even in its minutest details—the photograph, as it were, of the evolution of man, correct down to the very tiniest incident, and which at any time may be referred to, at any moment may be read, by those who train themselves for the study, who are willing to undergo the discipline necessary for such a research. Thus the record can be verified by each successive inquirer; we have the testimony of expert after expert who studies these most ancient records, and who sees not mere written characters but the events of the past, moving in living accuracy before him, moving as they occurred, instinct with life. The events of the history behind us thus live in the past of time.

According to those records, this religion which in modern days is called Zoroastrianism, the religion of the Pārsis, is, as I said, the second of the religions of the Āryan stock. The Iranians—coming forth from the same cradle-land as the first family, but spreading westwards over that vast extent of territory which includes not only modern Persia but the realm of ancient Persia—were led in their first migration thither by their great Prophet Zoroaster, who held to them the same position that Manu held to the whole original Āryan race. He belonged to the same mighty Brotherhood, and was a high Initiate of the same great Lodge, taught by the same Teachers, the Sons of the Fire. Many of you will have read in those most ancient records from the Book of Dzyān, given in the *Secret Doctrine*,[1] of the Sons of the Fire, who were the Instructors of all the great Initiates, called in their turn, the Lords of the Flame. He came as a teacher at the beginning of this Iranian sub-race, to give them the ancient truths in a form fitted for a civilization that was to grow up amongst them; in a form fitted for the type of mind which was to develop amongst them, suited to train, to evolve, to develop them, just as other faiths were given to other peoples with the same object and on similar lines.

From that mighty Teacher—whose date runs backward to a time at which every Orientalist would laugh in scorn—from him came down a line of prophets that superintended the earlier development of the Iranian people. And here let me remind you that, when we are speaking of such a line of prophets, it by no means follows that each prophet is a separate individual, for the same soul often reincarnates time after time in the same office. Such men as, say, Veda Vyāsa, had not one birth only upon earth but many births, for those men are always living in touch with earth, They are always superintending the spiritual evolution of mankind, and they come forth from time to time, from age to age, manifesting in a body of the time at which they appear, the same great Teacher, the same liberated soul, the same mighty instructor, over and over again taking the same name, as though to suggest the spiritual identity to the deaf ears of men.

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[1] Op. cit., by H. P. Blavatsky, I, Stanza 4. 1.

Tracing down this line of prophets, or this Prophet, we begin to see where the Greek tradition comes in, and we understand that the Zoroaster spoken of by Aristotle 9,600 years before what we call the time of Christ (dated of course by him from Plato, not from Christ) was seventh of this name from the original Zoroaster, and not the first Zoroaster as the Greeks supposed, and as I imagine too often many of the modern Pārsis are willing to believe. He then was seventh in the line of teachers who came to revive and reinforce the teaching when it was sinking downward and was menaced with overthrow. Still later than that there was another Zoroaster, about the year 4000 before Christ, who again revived the ancient teaching, again repeated the essential truths, giving them forth again with divine authority, and by means of that sacred fire which is the symbol of Deity, and which is in truth the voice of Deity. As we study this succession of prophets we see that from this ancient religion came what is called the "great science," the "Magic" of the Chaldees. We understand that the Magi of antiquity were teachers and priests of this same ancient faith, and—if, for a moment, I may startle the modern mind—that when more than 20,000 years ago the Chaldean sage stood on the roof of his observatory and marked and recorded the passage of the stars, that man was one of the comparatively modern descendants of the long line of the Magi, one of the comparatively modern representatives of the ancient lore of the Zoroastrian faith.

Let us, then, go backward and look at the teaching in the light of its earlier form, even although we have only its later recensions so far as scholarship is concerned. We shall find that even in its later recensions the ancient truths are recognizable though hidden; and that though many of these truths have been distorted in the modern form, have been materialized, have been degraded, still the occultist may recognize them; still he may point them out to those who follow this ancient religion, and may pray to the modern Pārsis, in the name of their ancient Prophet, the divine Initiate who founded their faith, to rise above modern materialism, to rise above the too petty limits of modern Orientalism, and to claim their rightful dignity as one of the most ancient of the world's religions. Let them link themselves to the immemorial occult tradition, and not degrade themselves by accepting every passing suggestion of European scholarship.

Let it be remembered, as we shall find proved by language presently, that these ancient Iranians were Āryan and not Semitic. That is one of the points on which dispute has arisen, and in a moment I will show you how the language bears out the occult contention. We admit, of course, in much later days a Semitic intermixture. But the Iranians came from the Āryan stock, and are really a sister race of the Āryans south of the Himālayas.

The first Zoroaster, in teaching again the essential principles which are the foundation of every faith, and in each faith are apt to be overlaid by later accretions, blended philosophy and religion in a remarkable way. Coming to found a civilization which had its own peculiar features, which was essentially agricultural in its character, which was permeated through and through with the idea of the practical side of life, which was intended to train men practically in a noble faith and sublime morality, he did not give a metaphysical philosophy and an exoteric religion, linking the two together. But he interblended the two, so that it is well nigh impossible to give an account of each separately. A better idea of the whole is obtained by following his method, and by studying the philosophy and the religion as a single system. Having foresight of the special civilization that was to grow up, he gave an immense amount of astronomical science interwoven with the philosophy and the religious teaching, and he gave that astronomical science—so necessary for people engaged in agriculture—in its occult form, and not in its poor dwarfed modern presentation. To him the stars were not mere masses of matter, revolving by blind unconscious laws around dead unconscious suns. To him the planets around the sun, and the mighty stars in the highest heavens, were but the bodies of spiritual Intelligences, whose will was their guiding law and whose knowledge ensured the stability of the universe. He taught astronomy not as of dead matter and soulless energy, but as of living Intelligences, moving in changeless order, because guided by perfect wisdom and unswerving will. He taught astronomy as the living occult science of spiritual wisdom, expressed in the material universe, the lowest form of its expression.

Out of the teaching of religious philosophy and of science there grew up the ethic which down to the present day in the glory of the Zoroastrian creed. A perfect practical purity is the keynote of that morality, purity in every action of the personal life, purity in every relation to external nature, honouring external elements as the manifestations of the divine purity, guarding, as it were, their spotless cleanliness as a homage to the Life wherefrom the whole proceeds. We shall find as we go on that these are the salient points of his teachings, but before I take them up one by one I must glance at this question of the language, for we need to understand that question to some extent if we are to trace the teachings through the different books that at present are in our hands.

I have said that the language in its oldest form, the language of the *Avesta*, justifies the occult statement of the antiquity of the Zoroastrian faith; for by the testimony—and I am quite willing to take it when it supports the occult view—by the testimony of European Orientalists, this Avestaic language, even as it is today in the latest recensions, is an Āryan dialect and is allied to the Sanskrit of the Vedas. There is not time, and it would be a little outside the subject, to say anything of the changes which you will know occurred in the development of Sanskrit in this country, the changes which are noticeable between the Sanskrit of the Vedas and the classical Sanskrit of later days; but the *Avesta* is allied to the early, to the Vaidic Sanskrit,[1] and that Sanskrit, as our German doctor tells us, is an elder sister of the Avestaic language.[2] Not only is this similarity clearly and distinctly marked in the words that are used, but the similarity goes far beyond the words themselves. These ancient Gāthās, or hymns, are written in metres that are closely allied to the metres of the *Sāma Veda.* Their rhythm, their feet, the evident method of their chanting, is a very close ally of the rhythm, of the feet, of the chanting, which still exist amongst the Hindus. So that we find on looking at them that this mark of antiquity is upon them, and as we throw back, despite the Orientalists, the antiquity of the Vedas, the antiquity of Hinduism, we carry back also with us the antiquity of the Zoroastrian faith, linking the two together in our defence as they were linked together in their earlier days in the far past of the two great peoples. So again, if I may for a moment take the occult record, the chants are the same. Those wonderful chants of the ancient world, which have their results in the invisible, those chants that control the lower intelligences and that rise up to the higher in the language of colour and of music—these Gāthās were chanted in that same archaic svara, and though lost by the priests of modern Zoroastrianism, the echoes are still recoverable from the Ākāshic records.

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[1] *Essays on the Pārsis*, p. 70.

[2] Ibid., p. 40.

Turning now from the language of the *Avesta* to that much contested word *Zend*, which some say is a language while others say it is a commentary—how far does European scholarship throw light upon the question? They say, some of them—and here I fear modern Pārsis tend to agree with them—that Zend is nothing more than a modern Pahlavi translation and commentary on the ancient writings. The word is certainly constantly applied simply to that translation, made under the Sasanian dynasty in comparatively modern times. But I am glad to see that some European scholarship rejects that contention, and declares that the Zend is the original commentary written in the language of the *Avesta*, and is therefore thrown back again to the ancient times, to the times of the language allied to the Sanskrit of the Vedas. Dr. Haug says that from the " use of the denomination Avesta and Zend by the Pahlavi translators, we are fully entitled to conclude that the Zend they mentioned was a commentary on the Avesta already existing before they undertook their translation; and as they considered it sacred, this Zend was probably in the same language as the original Avesta . . . Originally it (Zend) meant the commentaries made by the successors of Zarathushtra upon the sacred writings of the prophet and his immediate disciples. These commentaries must have been written in nearly the same language as the original text, and as that language gradually became unintelligible to all but the priests, the commentaries were regarded as part of the text, and a new explanation, or Zend, was required. This new Zend was furnished by the most learned priests of the Sasanian period, in the shape of a translation into Pahlavi, the vernacular language of Persia in those days; and in later times the term Zend has been confined to this translation."[1]

The contention that Zend was a commentary is to a large extent shown to be true, if once more we turn to the occult testimony instead of to the testimony of modern scholarship. For we find, and here we may take the evidence of H. P. Blavatsky—who was writing of that which was within her own knowledge from her own study under the Teacher, under her Guru—that this commentary, the original Zend of the Iranians, was a commentary written in a language derived from that ancient sacerdotal language to which I alluded in the beginning of this lecture. For there is a language known to all occultists, not a language of letters, as letters are understood in our modern tongues, but a language of signs, of symbols, of colours, of sounds, which rings out in music as well as shines in colour, and which takes its own forms, which every Initiate can recognize and translate into the lower languages of the intellectual world. It has sometimes been called the Zenzar. It has sometimes been called the Devabhāshā (language of the gods). H. P. Blavatsky says of Zend: "It means as in one sense correctly stated, 'a commentary or explanation'; but it also means that which the Orientalists do not seem to have any idea about, namely the 'rendering of the esoteric sentences,' the veil used to conceal the correct meaning of the Zend-zar texts, the sacerdotal language in use among the Initiates of archaic India. Found now in several undecipherable inscriptions, it is still used and studied to this day in the secret communities of the eastern adepts, and called by them—according to the locality—*Zend-zar* and *Brahma* or *Deva-bhāshā*. . . The Zend text is simply a secret *code* of certain words and expressions agreed upon by the original compilers, and the key to which is but with the Initiates."[1]

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[1] *Essays on the Pārsis*, pp. 120, 122.

Many names have been given to the language; names matter not, for they vary with every tongue; but the essential thing is that such a language exists, that it is known today as it was known a million years ago, that people learn it now as they learnt it then, that occult instruction is given in that language, and not in the clumsy sounds articulated by a physical tongue, and that from that language truths are translated into the most ancient intellectual tongues derived from it. The Vaidik Sanskrit is the most ancient intellectual echo of that archaic language, and the Zend of the Iranian has the same root, comes from the same fount. Later on, when we come to the Pahlavi translations we find there that we are within what is generally called historic time. "Pahlavi" is now used only to denote "the written language of Persia during the Sasanian dynasty, and to the literature of that period and a short time after,"[1] but in earlier times it was used generally for ancient Persian. Here we have Semitic words, traces of the Semitic influence, and it is contended that these run backwards to some 600 years before the time of Christ.[2] That matters not, for 600 years before the time of Christ is a modern time for an occultist. He is dealing with millennia and not with centuries, and this sign of Semitic influence in the later time has absolutely no influence on his judgment as to the origin of the ancient faith.

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[1] *The Theosophist*, vol. 4, article on Zoroastrianism, commencing on p. 224.

We must pass from this question of language, which might well be worked out at greater length and which leads to many other matters of interest, to one other disputed point of importance, too much overlooked. The Chaldean tradition, as it is preserved through the Grecian nation, is of vital interest, although it be at present ignored, as I understand, by the modern Zoroastrianism. This Chaldean tradition which comes through Greece, may roughly be said to have arisen as follows. In the time of Alexander it is admitted that there was a vast library at Persepolis, but as you know he burned it either in drunkenness or in revenge. Hence he is constantly called "the accursed Alexander" in all the later writings belonging to the faith of Zoroaster. Now, there is evidence that at the time of the burning there were two complete sets of the whole Zoroastrian literature. One of these sets was in the library and was burnt by this "accursed Alexander". The other set was taken possession of by the Greek conquerors, and by them was translated into Greek. Little of this survives, but fragments of it remain in the *Nabathæan Agriculture*, in the quotations made from it by Neo-Platonic writers, who speak of the *Oracles of Zoroaster* and of the teachings of that Prophet. These traces of the ancient teaching, preserved in the literature of the Greeks, strengthen and corroborate the acknowledged Zoroastrian tradition. Why then should not this assistance be accepted in the struggle to substantiate the antiquity of the religion? Why should not modern Pārsis take the evidence which comes down to them through this other line, since the two lines are found to blend into one? These fragments preserved by Greek authors, borne witness to in the literature of the Greek nation, these fragments still breathe the ancient spirit, and corroborate the teachings which Zoroaster in the past has given.

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[1] *Essays on the Pārsis*, p. 81. The Sasanian dynasty flourished from A.D. 226 to A.D. 653, when it was swept away by the Muhammadans.

[2] Ibid., p. 81.

Let us now turn to the literature itself, and consider our documents. First comes the *Yasna*, of which the most ancient part consists of the Gāthās, the archaic hymns, the teachings which came from the mouth of the great Prophet himself. They are now five only in number, and, as accepted in the present day, are mere fragments, but they are dignified, sublime and grand, bearing testimony to the nobility of the ancient teaching. These form the first part of the *Yasna*; the second part consists of prayers and ceremonies—prayers addressed to the supreme Deity, prayers equally addressed to the mighty Ones who stand below Him, forming the spiritual hierarchy. For ancient Zoroastrianism knew nothing of that modern materialism which tries to place God at one pole of the universe and man and his world at the other, with a mighty gap of bare and empty space between them. In Zoroastrianism, as in every other ancient faith, there was no gap in the universe, no empty space, no place where there were not living Intelligences, no place where spiritual beings were not working; from man near the base of the ladder to the supreme God at its head, there were ranged Intelligences growing higher and higher, diviner and diviner, and all these were objects of adoration—a fact to which the whole literature of Zoroastrianism bears testimony.

After the *Yasna*, with its two parts, we have the *Visparad*, a collection of invocations, of preparatory invocations to be used before other prayers and sacrifices. These two, the *Yasna* and the *Visparad*, may be regarded as holding the position in Zoroastrianism that is held by the Vedas in Hinduism. Below these there comes what was once a vast mass of literature of which only, alas! the names for the most part survive. There is one book complete, and some few fragments of the remainder, out of a list of twenty-one great treatises, of which the contents, roughly outlined, are also on record—the 21 Nasks, they are called. These deal with sciences of every kind, with medicine, with astronomy, with agriculture, with botany, with philosophy, with the whole range in fact of sciences and laws; they hold the position held by the Vedānga in Hinduism. I lay stress on these analogies, because they so much strengthen our position as to the antiquity and the dignity of this ancient faith. Of these only one book survives in its entirety, the *Vendidad*, the book of laws affecting the preservation of purity alike in external nature and in man.

Next we have the *Khordah Avesta* or little *Avesta*, consisting of Yashts (invocations) and of prayers, for the use of the laity rather than of the priests, many of them the prayers used daily by the modern Pārsis. It is a mixed collection—some of the fragments very ancient, some of comparatively recent date. After the burning of the library of Persepolis came a period of five hundred and fifty years of anarchy and tumult, and it was only at the close of this period that, under the Sasanian monarchs, the surviving fragments of Zoroastrian literature were gathered together. Little marvel that but fragments remained, fragments of a once glorious whole, like pieces of mosaic rent from their bed where they formed part of a great and intelligible picture. Only those who can recover the picture can see where each fragment fitted in, and can thus judge of the original beauty of the whole.

I have explained rather at length—considering the time at my disposal—though very briefly in reality, these preliminary details, because to most people they are almost unknown, and yet, unless they are known, it is impossible to appreciate the weight of evidence by which the antiquity of the philosophy and the religion themselves are sustained. And we may also say that it is necessary to see where the gaps in the evidence occur, to appreciate how much has been lost, how fragmentary are the Scriptures remaining in our hands, and how imperfect must therefore be any statement of the philosophy and the religion drawn from them alone. Enough, however, remains to substantiate the proposition that Zoroastrianism is at one with occult teaching on all important points, save one. In the Scriptures as accepted by orthodox Pārsis reincarnation is not found; it is taught in the fragments preserved by the Greeks, and in the *Desatir*, a book containing much occult truth, but none of these are regarded as authoritative.

Let us now turn to the philosophy and the religion themselves, and as there has been, most unfortunately, a materialistic reaction, under European influence, it is necessary to quote verse by verse from the received Scriptures in order to establish the ancient occult teachings.

At the head of the manifested universe stands Ahurā-Mazdāo, sometimes translated as the living Wisdom, sometimes as the Lord of Wisdom, sometimes as the Wise Lord. The cuneiform inscriptions have Aūramazdā, the Sasanian Aūharmazda, and the modern Persian is Hōrmazd or Ormazd.[1]

He is the Supreme, He the Universal, the All-pervasive, the Source and the Fountain of Life; He, in the Zoroastrian religion, holds the same position as the manifested Brahman of the Upanishads, who came forth at the beginning, the One, the source of life to man. He is described over and over again in the different Scriptures, not so fully in the Gāthās—though there also in part—as in some of the prayers and invocations. Let us take two specimens to show what is the description given of this mighty Being, in order that you may realize how sublime is the conception, how lofty this idea of the primeval God. In the *Ormazd Yasht*, He proclaims His own qualities, something the same way as Srī Krishna does in the 10th Discourse in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. He proclaims His names, the names which describe His attributes. He says: "I am the Protector, I am the Creator, I am the Nourisher, I am the Knowing, I am the Holiest Heavenly One. My name is the Healing. . . My name is God, My name is Great, Wise One; My name is the Pure . . . I am called the Majestic . . . the Far-seeing . . . I am called the Watcher . . . The Augmenter," and so on through a list of seventy-two names.[1] Let us listen to the description of Him in the words of the great Prophet Himself: "He, (Ahura-Mazda) first created, through His inborn lustre, the multitude of celestial bodies, and through His intellect the good creatures, governed by the inborn good mind. Thou, Ahura-Mazda, the Spirit who art everlasting, makest them (the good creatures) grow. When my eyes behold Thee, the Essence of Truth, the Creator of life, who manifests His life in His works, then I know Thee to be the primeval Spirit, Thou, Mazda, so high in mind as to create the world, and the father of the good mind."[2]

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[1] *Essays on the Pārsis*, p. 302.

Ahura-Mazdāo is revealed as threefold, and we read in the *Khordah Avesta*: "Praise to Thee, Ahura-Mazda, three-fold before other creatures."[3] Notice this "three-fold" for it is of vital importance. It joins this Zoroastrian conception of the First Being to the threefold or triple Brahman who is so familiar to us in the Upanishads, and it also explains His emanating two principles which exist in Him, and a third completing the Trinity, two principles which too often have been placed as opposing principles, making the Zoroastrian teaching essentially dualistic instead of essentially monistic as it is.

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[1] *Ormazd Yasht*, trans. from Prof. Spiegel by A. H. Bleek.

[2] *Gāthā Ahunavaitī*, trans. by Dr. Haug.

[3] Op. cit., vii, *Qursēt Nyāyis*, I, Spiegel.

But before taking up that point we must recognize that according to the ancient teaching there was behind and beyond Ahura-Mazdāo the One, the Unknowable, that Boundless Time who by Orientalists in Europe is denied, knowing not the occult teachings. They argue that the idea of Boundless Time, as the source of Ahura-Mazdāo is founded on a grammatical blunder, instead of its being, as it is, an attempt to convey the occult truth of the One Existence, unknowable to human faculties. But although they contest it, they admit the antiquity of the teaching; they must admit that the testimony of ancient days is at one with the occult teaching. If we take the Greek evidence, it speaks with no uncertain voice as to what was taught. Plutarch says: "Cromasdes [Ahura-Mazdāo] sprang out of the purest light;"[1] Damascius writes: "The Magi and the whole Āryan nation consider, as Eudemos writes, some Space, and others Time, as the universal cause, out of which the good god as well as the evil spirit were separated, or, as others assert, light and darkness, before these *two spirits arose*."[2] Theodoros speaks of "the nefarious doctrine of the Persians, which Zoroastrades introduced, namely that about ZOROUAN, whom he makes the ruler of the whole universe, and calls him Destiny; and who when offering sacrifice in order to generate Hormisdas, produced both Hormisdas and Satan."[1] Very interesting is this blundering account of a controversialist, especially his reference to the occult teaching of the primeval Sacrifice. This again comes out in a "Refutation of Heresies" in the fifth century A.D. by Ezvik: "Before anything, heaven or earth, or creature of any kind whatever therein, was existing, Zeruan existed. . . . He offered sacrifices for a thousand years in the hope of obtaining a son, ORMIZ by name, who was to create heaven, earth, and everything therein."[2] Dr. Haug, who clings to the grammatical blunder theory, nevertheless acknowledges: "That this doctrine of *Zarvan Akarana* was commonly believed in Persia, during the times of the Sasanians, may be distinctly seen from the reports quoted above (pp. 12-14)."[3]

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[1] *Essays on the Pārsis*, p. 9.

[2] Ibid., p. 12.

Apart from all occult testimony that is enough to establish that Zarathushtra taught the ancient doctrine of the One Existence, unmanifested, from which the manifested came forth. And when we further read of a primeval sacrifice, performed by God Himself, from which Ahura-Mazdāo was produced, we know by the hint, so dark to the many but so clear to the few, that the primary Sacrifice, the limitation by which manifestation was rendered possible, was also taught by Zarathushtra, as it is known to every student of occultism, and is hinted at over and over again in the

[1] *Essays on the Pārsis*, p. 12.

[2] Ibid, p. 13.

[3] Op. cit., pp. 309-10.

scriptures of the world. H. P. Blavatsky says: "Ahura-Mazda (Asura-Mazda) himself issued from Zero-ana Akerna 'Boundless (circle of) Time,' or the unknown cause. The glory of the latter is too exalted, its light too resplendent for either human intellect or mortal eye to grasp and see. Its primal emanation is eternal light, which, from having been previously concealed in Darkness, was called to manifest itself, and thus was formed Ormazd, the 'King of Life'. He is the 'first-born' in Boundless Time, but like his own antetype (pre-existing spiritual idea), has lived within Darkness from all eternity."[1]

To the occultist, knowing that Zarathushtra was a member of the Brotherhood, there can of course be no doubt as to his teaching on this fundamental truth; but for others the external testimony ought to be sufficient.

Let us now return to the threefold Ahura-Mazdāo, and His unfolding in order that creation might be; we learn that from Him duality proceeded, Spentō-Mainyush and Angrā-Mainyush, two principles that had their root in Him, but that were unfolded in order that a manifested universe might be brought into existence. The words "good" and "evil" are used to describe these two principles, but they are not the best words of description; the key is given in the most ancient Gāthās. Good and evil may be said to only come into existence when man in his evolution develops the power of knowledge and of choice; the original duality is not of good and evil, but is of spirit and matter, of reality and non-reality, of light and darkness, of construction and destruction, the two poles between which the universe is woven and without which no universe can be.

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[1] Article on Zoroastrianism, *The Theosophist*, IV, p. 224.

The second phrase, "reality and non-reality," is used by Zarathushtra himself in the proclamation of this fundamental truth, for we read in the *Gāthā Ahunavaitī*, that the Prophet declared, standing by the sacred Fire—we will in a few moments see the significance of a declaration made standing by the Fire—"In the beginning there was a pair of twins, two spirits, each of a peculiar activity"; He goes on to say: "And these two spirits united created the first (the material things); one the reality, the other the non-reality."[1] There is that primary duality, Sat and Asat, exactly the occult teaching, that from the One the duality unfolds, in order that the many may proceed. The One created the reality and the other the unreality.

The Prophet goes on to say that the one or the other of these must be followed: of these two "spirits" you must choose one, just as in all ancient teachings it is said that we may choose either spirit or matter; call them, if you will, good and evil, but good and evil are not the fundamental names, it is the spiritual or the material between which the choice of man is made. Various names are given to these two showing how they were understood in the ancient days. In *Gāthā Ushatavaitī.* (Yasna xlv) it is said: "All ye who have come from near and far, should now listen and hearken to what I shall proclaim. Now the wise have manifested this universe as a duality. . . . I will proclaim the two primeval spirits of the world, of whom the increaser thus spoke to the destroyer."[1] There are two names again that give us the clue to the secret, the "increaser" and the "destroyer," the one from whom the life is ever pouring forth, and the other the material side which belongs to form, and which is ever breaking up in order that life may go on into higher expression. As though to impress this on the people, it is said that the so-called evil spirit is the death by which the body of men is struck away; the destruction of form means the passing on of life into higher conditions—not the work of any evil power, but the liberation of the soul, and therefore a part of the divine manifestation of the universe.

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[1] *Essays on the Pārsis.* *Yas.*, 30. 3, 4. Trans. by Dr. Haug.

They are also spoken of as "the two masters," as "the two creators," and we find it declared that the mighty Intelligence Srosh worshipped these "two creators who create all things".[2] Surely this great One would not worship evil, though he might reverence the duality in the divine nature. As though to set the question at rest, They are spoken of as "my two spirits" by Ahura-Mazdāo Himself.[3] Dr. Haug fully grasps this idea and remarks: "They are the two moving causes in the universe, united from the beginning, and therefore called 'twins' (*Yēmā*, Sans. *Yaman*). They are present everywhere; in Ahura-Mazda as well as in man. . . . We never find Angro-Mainyush mentioned as a constant opponent of Ahura-Mazda in the Gāthās, as is the case in later writings. . . . Such is the original

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[1] op. cit., 1. 2.

[2] op. cit., *Yasna*, 57. 2.

[3] op. cit., *Yasna*, 19. 9.

Zoroastrian notion of the two creative spirits, who form only two parts of the Divine Being."[1]

A little more difficult, perhaps, to trace, more covered over by a change that came in later times, there is a third person in this primeval Trinity: Ahura-Mazdāo, who is the first and from whom all proceeds; the second with the duality which is ever the mark of the second Person in the manifested Trinity; the third, the Wisdom, the primeval Wisdom, or Mind, by which the world was made. This is Armaiti, of whom it is written: "To succour this life (to increase it) Armaiti came with wealth, the good and true mind; She, the everlasting one, created the material world."[2] In later days Armaiti became identified with Her creation, and was worshipped as the Goddess of the earth, but of yore She completed the Trinity.

Next in order come the hierarchies of the heavenly Intelligences, led by the seven great Spirits, the Ameshaspentas, the seven presiding Gods; sometimes Ahura-Mazdāo is placed at their head as one of them; sometimes They form the lower septenary and above them is the higher Triad—a conception familiar to every student of Theosophy, who learns that the universe is a decade represented by the lower seven and the higher Three, as in the Sephiroth of the Jewish Kabalah. The seven Ameshaspentas, if Ahura-Mazdāo be omitted, are: Vohūman, the Good Mind; Asha Vahishta, the Best Holiness; Kshatraver, Power; Spendarmad, Love; Haurvatāt, Health; Ameretād, Immortality; and

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[1] op. cit., pp. 303-5.

[2] op. cit., *Gāthā Ahunavaitī*, 7.

Fire, "the most helpful of the Ameshaspentas".[1] To these prayers are continually addressed, hymns are continually chanted to them, the whole liturgy is permeated by their worship; and yet some Oriental scholars—followed in this by only a small minority, I am glad to say, of modern Pārsis—have materialized them into mere attributes of God, instead of the living Intelligences by whom as it is said in the Gāthās, the worlds were made and are sustained.

Dr. Mills degrades them into mere attributes, and in his translation always thus treats them, though occasionally forced into very untenable positions by this modern shrinking from the recognition of invisible Intelligences everywhere. Let us see if they can be taken as mere attributes:

> "Yet the most bounteous Mazda Ahura, and
> Piety with Him,
> And Asha the settlements furthering, Thou Good
> Mind and Thou the Dominion,
> Hear ye me, all! and have mercy."[2]

The "qualities," here spelt with capitals, are some of the Ameshaspentas, Spendarmad, Vohūman and Kshatraver, and the plural "ye," as well as the phrase, "hear ye me, *all*!" is a curious way of addressing a God and his qualities.

> "Doctrines, Ahura, and actions, tell me which
> are the best ones, Mazda,
> And the debtor's prayer of the praisers; tell me
> this with the Truth and the Good Mind,

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[1] *Yasna*, I. 6, trans. by Spiegel, p. 26.

[2] Gāthā II (*Yas*. 33). Trans. by Dr. Mills, p. 127.

> And by Sovereign Power and grace bring on this
> world's perfection."

The Pahlavi has: "Do Thou, therefore, O Aūharmazd, declare to me that which is the best word and deed, and do ye give that which is Thy debt, O Vohūman, and Thine, O Ashavahisht, for this praise, for through your sovereignty, O Aūharmazd, the completion of Progress is made manifestly real in the world at will."[1]

> "Thus I conceived Thee, bounteous, Ahura-Mazda,
> When with the Good Mind's help, obedience
> neared me,
> And asked of me: "Who art thou? Whence thy
> coming?"[2]

—a curious proceeding for a quality.

> "These your favours first ask I thou, Ahura!
> Asha! and grant too thine, Āramaiti!"[3]

Many more passages might be cited from the Gāthās, did space permit. Then take this from the *Yasna Haptanhaiti*, admittedly one of the oldest parts of the *Yasna*, after the Gāthās: "We worship Ahura-Mazda the righteous, master of righteousness. We worship the Ameshaspentas (the archangels), the possessors of good, the givers of good. We worship the whole creation of the righteous spirit."[4] The *Visparad* begins: "I invoke and proclaim to: the Lords of the Heavenly, the Lords of the Earthly"[5] and so on through a long list of Gods. Again: "We make them known: To Ahura-Mazdā, to the holy Sraōsha, to Rashnu the most righteous, to Mithra with large pastures. To the Ameshaspentas, to the Fravarshis of the pure, to the souls of the pure, to the Fire, the son of Ahura-Mazda, and to the great Lord."[1] The *Yasna* bears its testimony: "I invoke and proclaim to: The creator Ahura-Mazda, the Brilliant, Majestic, Greatest, Best, most Beautiful, the Strongest, most Intellectual, of the best body, the Highest through holiness; who is very wise, who rejoices afar, who created us, who formed us, who keeps us, the Holiest among the heavenly. I invoke and proclaim to: Vohūmano, Ashavahista, Kshathra-Vairya, Spenta-ārmaiti, Haurvat and Ameritāt; the body of the cow, the soul of the cow, the fire (the son) of Ahura-Mazda, the most helpful of the Ameshaspentas."[2]

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[1] Op. cit., pp. 152, 153.

[2] Ibid., p. 165.

[3] Ibid., p. 343.

[4] *Essays on the Pārsis*, p. 171.

[5] Op. cit., trans. by Prof. Spiegel, p. 5.

But the *Yasnas* are full of worship, worship of the highest Gods, of Mithra,[3] of the Goddess of the waters,[4] of Srosh[5]—one of the mightiest of the great Intelligences—of the sun, moon, and stars.[6] In fact, the whole fabric of Zoroastrianism must be destroyed, if the worship of the Gods is to be wrenched out of it in deference to European materialism. In it, as in Hinduism, the Gods are everywhere, and as the worshipper ascends, he worships loftier and loftier Intelligences, till he reaches Ahura-Mazdāo, of whose will they are the agents, by whose life they are sustained.

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[1] Op. cit., 12. 18, 19, p. 18.
[2] *Yasna*, 1. 1-6. Trans. by Prof. Spiegel, p. 26.
[3] *Mihir Yasht*, *Essays on the Pārsis*, p. 202.
[4] *Abān Yasht*; ibid., p. 197.
[5] *Yasna*, 57; ibid , p. 189.
[6] *Yasna*, 4. 39. Trans. by Spiegel, p. 42

We now come to the Fire, the supreme symbol of God, the symbol of divine life, that which is called the Son of Ahura-Mazdāo, the sacred symbol most reverenced by the Zoroastrians of today. As we might expect, we find prayer after prayer addressed to the Fire, worship addressed to the Fire in the plainest, the clearest and the most explicit terms, the Fire which is declared to be the most helpful of all the spiritual Intelligences, the Fire which is the most friendly, coming down from Ahura-Mazdāo and acquainted with all heavenly secrets. "Happy is the man to whom thou comest mightily, Fire, son of Ahura-Mazda. More friendly than the most friendly, more worthy of adoration than the most worthy of honour. Mayest thou come helpfully to us at the greatest business. Fire, thou art acquainted with Ahura-Mazda, acquainted with the heavenly. Thou art the holiest of the same (the fire) that bears the name Vāzista. O Fire, son of Ahura-Mazda, we draw near to thee."[1]

What is the Fire? Ever, in every religion, has fire been the symbol of the supreme God; Brahman is fire; Ahura-Mazdāo is fire; the Jews worship their God as a pillar of fire, and the Christians proclaim, "Our God is a consuming fire". Everywhere fire has been and is the supreme emblem; for He who is glory is revealed as fire; it blazes out from That which "is dark by excess of light," and the whole universe is but the

[1] *Yasna*, 36. 1. 4-10. Trans. by Prof. Spiegel, p. 96.

outcome of the living flame. Oh! if I could show you Zarathushtra, the mighty One, as he first spake to the people, and taught them the truths that the Fire had revealed to him, the Sons of the Fire who sent him to the earth to teach those truths to the people.. Picture him standing by the altar, speaking of what the Fire revealed to him. Remember what is said in one of those "Oracles" which reproduce the early traditions: "When thou beholdest a sacred Fire, formless, flashing dazzlingly throughout the world, Hear thou the voice of the Fire." As Zarathushtra spoke, there was at first no fire at the altar at his side; there was sandalwood in fragrant heaps, there were perfumes, but no fire. As the Prophet stood there he held a Rod—of which every occultist knows, a Rod, a copy of which was used in the Mysteries—filled with the living fire of the upper spheres, and with the twining fire-serpents round it. As he raised that Rod, pointing it to heaven, through infinite space, through the vault of the blue sky, the heavens burst into fire, and lambent flames played on every side; cleaving the air, some of these flames darted downwards and fired the altar at his side, and the living fire wreathing round him made him a mass of flame, as he spake "the Words of the Fire," and proclaimed the everlasting truths. That was how Zarathushtra taught in the ancient days. And he gave the hymns of fire, that could call it down from above—the compelling mantras, the words of power—and century after century, millennium after millennium, the fire that blazed on the Zoroastrian altar in the fire-temple was no mere mingling of material flames. Ever from above, from the heavens, the sacred fire was called down from the fiery Ākāsha; at the word of the priest, that fell upon the altar, and there blazed as the living symbol of God. When the lower priesthood had to act, when the higher one was not available for the service, then they were given the rod of fire in which the electric fire was ever flashing, the living flame, and as they touched the altar-fuel with that rod, the heavenly fire blazed out.

Even now, see how the tradition has come down in the very ceremonies by which the fire is lighted on the new altar. Today there is still a faint echo of the ancient truth, although the power has departed and no Pārsi Dastur can summon fire from on high. Fire is gathered from all the different sources in the town wherein the sacred flame is to be lighted, but the fire is not used as it is gathered from the earthly fuel; for the officiator places above the gathered fire an iron tray heaped with sandalwood, and holding it high above so that material contact shall not be, the fire below lights the fuel, and a second fire leaps up; nine times over that ceremony is repeated, until the very essence of fire, as it were, is gathered—pure for the pure, and worthy to be the symbol of the divine. Further, they seek to have the electric fire, the fire of lightning, flashing down from heaven, and as they are now unable to call it down for themselves, sometimes even for years they have to wait before the last fire is gathered, sometimes for years to be patient ere that fire may be mingled with the others, that burn upon the sacred altar. Before that sacred Fire every Zoroastrian bows, and in the Zoroastrian home, when sunset falls, a fragment fire is carried through every room in the gathering dusk, emblem of the purifying, the protecting power of the Supreme.

We must now hastily glance at the way in which man is regarded, that we may understand his place in the hierarchy of Intelligences. In him are the two principles—spirit and matter—as in all else, and he can side with the one or the other. All the ethic is based on the idea that he shall throw himself on the side of the pure, battle for the pure, maintain the pure. It may be that the later view of Angro-Mainyush as the enemy was an attempt to stir man into active conflict against evil, to make him feel he was fighting the battle of the "good spirit" against the "evil spirit". To be in everything actively on the side of purity is a personal duty. The Zoroastrian must keep the earth pure, must till it as a religious duty; he must perform all the functions of agriculture as a service to the Gods, for the earth is the pure creature of Ahura-Mazdāo, to be guarded from all pollution. The air must be kept pure. The water must be kept pure; if anything unclean, like a corpse, falls into the water, the good Zoroastrian must remove it, that the pure element may not be fouled. Hence also the objection to burning a dead body, as polluting the fire by the touch of the unclean. Therefore is the body reverently carried to the Towers of Silence, and in that guarded place, open but to the heavens, it is laid, that the vultures may swiftly devour it, and no pure element may thereby be soiled.

Passing from that purity of external nature, with which a Pārsi must not only passively but also actively associate himself, we come to that famous axiom of their religion: "Pure thoughts, pure words, pure deeds." That is the constantly reiterated rule of the

Zoroastrian life—and we notice that the three are placed in the occult order—repeated in his daily prayers, insisted on at every turn. The first words of the *Khordah Avesta* form the Ashem-Vohū, the most sacred formula ever repeated: "Purity is the best good. ✓ Happiness, happiness is to him—namely, to the best pure in purity."[1] When Ahura-Mazdāo is answering Zarathushtra as to the recital of the Ashem-Vohū, He declares that the recital of the Ashem-Vohū that is worth all the good things created by Himself is ✓ "when one forsakes evil thoughts and evil words and evil deeds."[2]

Between the ages of seven and fifteen, the child must be initiated, and then is put on him (or her) for the first time the kusti, or sacred thread, and the sūdrā, or white linen shirt, both emblems of purity. The kusti is made of seventy-two threads of lambswool, and is wound thrice round the waist, signifying the good thoughts, words and deeds incumbent on the wearer; it is knotted twice in front ✓ and twice behind. Truthfulness, chastity, obedience to parents, hospitality, industry, honesty, kindness to useful animals, are virtues on which special stress is laid, and charity is made an essential part of religion. It is to be wise charity, and bestowed on the deserving; especially are recommended—helping the poor, helping those to marry who cannot afford to do so, helping to educate the children of those unable to perform this duty for themselves. Ervad Sheriarji Dadabhai Barucha says: "Just as certain virtues are said to be the peculiar attributes of the four classes of the people, and highly becoming to them, so certain vices are specially to be shunned by them. For the priestly class, hypocrisy, covetousness, negligence, slothfulness, attention to trifles and unbelief in religion are peculiarly unbecoming. The warrior must be above oppression, violence, breach of promise, encouragement of evil, ostentation, arrogance and insolence. The husbandman must fly from ignorance, envy, ill-will and malice; and the artisan must avoid incredulity, ingratitude, rudeness and slander (Mainyo-i Khart, lix)."[1] It is interesting to notice that when Ahura-Mazdāo proclaimed "the righteous (Ahuna-Vairya) both spiritual and earthly," the Ahuna-Vairya had three lines—the four classes, the five chiefs, and a conclusion. The classes were the fourfold order of priests, warriors, agriculturists and artisans,[2] another mark of the close kinship of the Iranians with the first Āryan sub-race.

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[1] Op. cit., translated by Professor Spiegel, p. 3.

[2] *Hodokht Nask, Essays on the Pārsis*, p. 219.

Other of these marks are interesting: the sacrifice of the Homa, worshipped as fervently and extolled as highly in the *Homa Yasht*[3] as in the *Sāma Veda*; the names of the priests—the Ātharva (atharvan), the Zaota (Hotā), and the identity by function of the Rathwi with the Adhvarya; milk, ghee, holy water, sacred twigs, are all used in certain ceremonies; Pārsis, like Hindus, have their prayers for the dead, at stated intervals. In truth, the two faiths are sister faiths, only invasion, oppression and exile have shattered the younger faith to such an extent that much of its ancient birthright has been lost.

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[1] *Zoroastrian Religion and Customs*, p. 31.

[2] *Yama*, 19. 17, *Essays on the Pārsis*, p. 188.

[3] *Essays on the Pārsis*, pp. 176-85.

The seven principles of the human constitution are clearly mentioned in *Yasna*, liv, 1: "Bodies together with bones, vital power and form, strength and consciousness, soul and Fravarshi."[1] The first three are the dense and etheric bodies with Prāna; strength is Kāma, consciousness is Manas, Urvan, translated soul, is Buddhi, and Fravarshi is Ātmā. "Every being of the good creation, whether living or deceased or still unborn, has its own Fravarshi," says Dr. Haug.[2] But this hardly gives the full idea of the word, as it is expounded in the *Fravaridin Yasht*, in which Ahura-Mazdāo declares that everything good is maintained by their splendour and glory. They are called the "strong guardian-angels of the righteous," and evidently represent the Ātmā, and in many cases the Ātmā when Manas and Buddhi have been merged in it.

After death, the soul passes into the intermediate world, "the time-worn paths which are for the wicked and which are for the righteous,"[3] spoken of by Ahura-Mazdāo as "the frightful, deadly, destructive path which is the separation of the body and soul,"[4] Kāmaloka. The soul of the righteous meets a beautiful maiden, the embodiment of his good thoughts, good words, and good deeds; he crosses the "bridge of the judge" safely, and reaches heaven. But the soul of

[1] Op. cit., translated by Prof. Spiegel, p. 120.

[2] *Essays on the Pārsis*, p. 206

[3] *Vendidad*, Fargard, 19. 29, *Essays on the Pārsis*, p. 225.

[4] *Hadokht Nask*, Yt. 22. 17, ibid., p. 222.

the wicked meets a hideous hag, the embodiment of his evil thoughts, evil words and evil deeds, and he fails to cross the bridge and falls into fire.

Again much is left untold, much is too briefly, too baldly, described; yet enough has been said to justify the occultist when he bears witness to this ancient religion, the second of the Fifth Race religions, that it springs from the primeval source, that its Prophet was one of the Divine Initiates, that it comes down from the past, millennium after millennium, and is but poorly represented by the comparatively materialized Zoroastrianism of today. The study of its Scriptures might revive it; the old knowledge might again be breathed into it; these concessions to Western criticism and Western materialism might be repudiated by every Zoroastrian as no part of his ancient, of his glorious faith. O my Pārsi brothers! your Prophet is not dead. He is not perished: he is watching over the religion that he founded: ever seeking to raise it from its present degradation, to give it back its lost knowledge, its lost powers. What nobler work for the Zoroastrian of today than to permeate his brethren with the ancient fire, to relight its blaze on the spiritual altar of their hearts? What nobler work than to study his own Scriptures, and to go forth and teach the ancient learning with the authority and power that can only be wielded by a man of the same faith with those he addresses. The Fire is not dead; it is only smouldering on its ancient altars; white hot are the ashes, ready to reburst into flames. And I dream of a day when the breath of the great Prophet Zarathustra shall sweep again through his temples, fanning the ashes on the altars of those ancient fanes, and every altar shall flash into fire, and again from heaven the answering flames shall fall, making the Iranian religion once more what it ought to be, a beacon light for the souls of men, one of the greatest religions of the world.

JAINISM

A CONVENTION LECTURE

6

JAINISM

We shall find ourselves now in a very different atmosphere. We shall not have round us the atmosphere of romance, of chivalry, that we find both in the faith of Islam and in that of the Sikhs. On the contrary we shall be in a calm, philosophic, quiet atmosphere. We shall find ourselves considering the problems of human existence looked at with the eye of the philosopher, of the metaphysician, and on the other hand the question of conduct will take up a large part of our thought; how man should live; what is his relation to the lower creatures around him; how he should so guide his life, his actions, that he may not injure, that he may not destroy. One might almost sum up the atmosphere of Jainism in one phrase that we find in the *Sūtra Kritāṅga*,[1] that man by injuring no living creature reaches the Nirvāna which is peace. That is a phrase that seems to carry with it the whole thought of the Jaina: peace—peace between man and man, peace between man and animal, peace everywhere and in all things, a perfect brotherhood of all that lives. Such is the ideal of the Jaina, such is the thought that he endeavours to realise upon earth.

Now the Jainas are comparatively a small body; they only number between one and two million men; a community powerful not by its numbers, but by its purity of life, and also by the wealth of its members—merchants and traders for the most part. The four castes of the Hindus are recognised by the Jainas, but you will now find few Brāhmanas among them; few also of the Kshattriyas, which caste seems wholly incompatible with the present ideas of the Jainas, though their Jinas are all Kshattriyas. The vast mass of them are Vaishyas—traders, merchants and manufacturers—and we find them mostly gathered in Rajputana, in Gujarat, in Kathiawar; scattered indeed also in other parts, but the great Jaina communities may be said to be confined to these regions of India. Truly it was not so in the past, for we shall find presently that they spread, especially at the time of the Christian Era, as well as before it and after it, through the whole of Southern India; but if we take them as they are today, the provinces that I mentioned may be said practically to include the mass of the Jainas.

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[1] 3. 20.

There is one point with regard to the castes which separates them from Hinduism. The Samnyāsin of the Jaina may come from any caste. He is not restricted, as in ordinary orthodox Hinduism, to the Brāhmana caste. The Yati may come from any of the castes, and of course as a rule comes from the Vaishya, that being the enormously predominating caste among the Jainas.

We will consider their way of looking at the world for a moment; and then we will consider the great Being, who is spoken of in western orientalism, not by themselves, as the Founder.

They have the same enormous cycles of time that we are familiar with in Hinduism; and it must be remembered that both the Jaina and the Buddhist are fundamentally offshoots from ancient Hinduism. It would have been better had men not been so inclined to divide, and to lay stress on differences rather than similarities—if both these great offshoots had remained as Darshanas of Hinduism, rather than have separated off into different, and as it were, rival faiths. For a long time among the occidental scholars, Jainism was looked on as derived from Buddhism. That is now admitted to be a blunder and both alike derive from the more ancient Hindu faith; and in truth there are great differences between the Jaina and the Buddhist, although there be also similarities, likenesses of teaching. There is however no doubt at all, if you will permit me to speak positively, that Jainism in India is far older than Buddhism. The last of its great Prophets was contemporary with Sākya Muni, the Lord Buddha; but he was the last of a great succession, and simply gave to Jainism its latest form. I said there were great cycles of time believed in by the Jaina as by the Hindu; and we find that in each vast cycle—which resembles the day and night of Brahmā—twenty-four great Prophets come to the world, somewhat, though not entirely, of the nature of Avatāras. They always climb up from manhood, while, in some cases, the Hindu is loath to admit that an Avatāra is a perfected man. The Jaina has no doubt at all on this point. His twenty-four great Teachers, the Tīrthamkaras, as they are called, these are perfected men. To them he gives the many names that you will find applied in Buddhism in somewhat different senses. He speaks of them as Arhats, as Buddhas, as Tathāgatas, and so on, but above all as

Jinas; the Jina is the conqueror, the man made perfect, who has conquered his lower nature, who has reached divinity, in whom the Jīva asserts his supreme and perfected powers: he is the Īshvara, from the Jaina point of view.

Twenty-four of these appear in each great cycle, and, if you take the *Kalpa Sūtra* of the Jainas, you will find in that the lives of these Jinas. The life of the only one which is given there at all fully—and the fullness is of a very limited description—is that of the twenty-fourth and last, he who was called Mahāvīra, the mighty Hero. He stands to the Jaina as the last representative of the Teachers of the world; as I said, he is contemporary with Sākhya Muni, and by some he is said to be his kinsman. His life was simple, with little incident apparently, but great teachings. Coming down from loftier regions to his latest incarnation, that in which he was to obtain illumination, he at first guided his course into a Brāhmana family, where, it would seem from the account given, he had intended to take birth; but Indra, the King of the Devas, seeing the coming of the Jina, said that it was not right that he should be born among the Brāhmanas, for ever the Jina was a Kshattriya and in a royal house must he be born. So Indra sent one of the Devas to guide the birth of the Jina to the family of King Siddhārtha, in which he was finally born. His birth was surrounded by those signs of joy and delight that ever herald the coming of one of the great Prophets of the race—the songs of the Devas, the music of the Gandharvas, the scattering of flowers from heaven—these are ever the accompaniments of the birth of the one of the Saviours of the world.

And the Child is born amid these rejoicings, and since, after his conception in the family the family had increased in wealth, in power, in prosperity, they named Him Vardhamāna—the increaser of the prosperity of his family. He grew up as a boy, as a youth, loving and dutiful to his parents; but ever in his heart the vow that he had taken, long lives before, to renounce all, to reach illumination, to become a Saviour of the world. He waits until father and mother are dead, so that he may not grieve their hearts by the leaving; and then, taking the permission of his elder brother and the royal councillors, he goes forth surrounded by crowds of people to adopt the ascetic life. He reaches the jungle; he pulls off his robes, the royal robes and royal ornaments; he tears out his hair; he puts on the garment of the ascetic; he sends away the royal procession that followed him, and plunges alone into the jungle. There for twelve years he practises great austerities, striving to realize himself and to realise the nothingness of all things but the Self; and in the thirteenth year illumination breaks upon him, and the light of the Self shines forth upon him, and the knowledge of the Supreme becomes his own. He shakes off the bonds of Avidyā and becomes the omniscient, the all-knowing; and then he comes forth as Teacher to the world, teaching for forty-two years of perfect life.

Of the teachings, we are here told practically nothing; the names of some disciples are given; but the life, the incidents, these are all omitted. It is as though the feeling that all this is illusion, it is nothing, it is naught, had passed into the records of the Teacher, so as to make the outer teaching as nothing, the Teacher Himself as nothing. And then he dies after forty-two years of labour at Pāpā 526 years before the birth of Christ. Not very much, you see, to say about the Lord Mahāvīra; but his life and work are shown in the philosophy that he left, in that which he gave to the world, though the personality is practically ignored.

Before him, 1,200 years, we are told, was the twenty-third of the Tīrthamkaras, and then, 84,000 years before him, the twenty-second and so on backwards and backwards in the long scroll of time, until at last we come to the first of these, Rishabhadeva, the father of King Bharata, who gave to India its name. There the two faiths, Jainism and Hinduism, join, and the Hindu and the Jaina together revere the Great One who, giving birth to a line of Kings, became the Rishi and the teacher.

When we come to look at the teaching from the outside—I will take the inside presently—we find certain canonical Scriptures, as we call them, analogous to the Pitakas of the Buddhists, forty-five in number; they are the Siddhānta, and they were collected by Bhadrabāka, and reduced to writing, between the third and fourth centuries before Chirst. Before that, as was common in India, they were handed down from mouth to mouth with that wonderful accuracy of memory which has ever been characteristic of the transmission of Indian Scriptures. Three or four hundred years before the reputed birth of Christ, they were put into writing, reduced, the western world would say, to a fixed form. But we know well enough it was no more fixed than in the faithful memories of the pupils who took them from the Teacher; and even now as Max Muller tells us, if every Veda were lost they could be textually reproduced by those who learn to repeat them. So the Scriptures, the Siddhānta, remained written, collected by Bhadrabāka, at this period before Christ. In A.D. 54 a council was held, the Council of Valabhi, where a recension of these Scriptures was made, under Devarddigāmin, the Buddhaghosha of the Jainas. There are forty-five books, as I said: 11 Angas, 22 Upāngas, 10 Pakinnakas, 6 Chedas, 4 Mūla-sūtras, and 2 other Sūtras. This makes the canon of the Jaina religion, the authoritative Scripture of the faith. There seem to have been older works than these, which have been entirely lost, which are spoken of as the Pūrvas, but of these, it is said, nothing is known. I do not think that that is necessarily true. The Jainas are peculiarly secretive as to their sacred books, and there are masterpieces of literature, among the sect of Digambaras, which are entirely withheld from publication; and I shall not be surprised if in the years to come many of these books, which are supposed to be entirely lost, should be brought out, when the Digambaras have learnt that, save in special cases, it is well to spread abroad truths, that men may have them. Secretiveness may be carried so far as to be a vice, beyond the bounds of discretion, beyond the bounds of wisdom.

Then outside the canonical Scriptures there is an enormous literature of Purānas and Itihāsas, resembling very much the Purānas and Itihāsas of the Hindus. They are said, I know not whether truly or not, to be more systematized than the Hindu versions; what is clear is that in many of the stories there are variations, and it would be an interesting task to compare these side by side, and to trace out these variations, and to try and find the reasons that have caused them.

So much for what we may call their special literature; but when we have run over that, we find that we are still faced by a vast mass of books, which, although originating in the Jaina community, have become the common property of all India—grammars, lexicons, books on rhetoric and on medicine—these are to be found in immense numbers and have been adopted wholesale in India. The well-known *Amarakosha*, for instance, is a Jaina work that every student of Sanskrit learns from beginning to end.

I said the Jainas came to Southern India—spreading downwards through the whole of the southern part of the peninsula; we find them giving kings to Madura, to Trichinopoly and to many other cities in Southern India. We find not only that they thus give rulers; but we find they are the founders of Tamil literature. The Tamil grammar, said to be the most scientific grammar that exists, is a Jaina production. The popular grammar, *Nāmal*, by Pavanandi, is Jaina, as is *Nāladiyār*. The famous poet Tiruvalluvar's *Kural*, known I suppose to every Southerner, is said to be a Jaina work, for this reason, that the terms he uses are Jaina terms. He speaks of the Arhats; he uses the technical terms of the Jaina religion, and so he is regarded as belonging to the Jaina faith.

The same is true of the Canarese literature; and it is said that from the first century of the Christian Era to the twelfth, the whole literature of Canara is dominated by the Jainas. So great then were they in those days.

Then there came a great movement throughout Southern India, in which the followers of Mahādeva, Shiva, came preaching and singing through the country, appealing to that deep emotion of the human heart, Bhakti, which the Jaina had too much ignored. Singing stotras to Mahādeva they came, chanting his praises, especially working cures of diseases in his name, and before these wonderful cures and the rush of the devotion which was aroused by their singing and preaching, many of the Jainas were themselves converted; the remainder of them were driven away, so that in Southern India they became practically non-existent. Such is their story in South; such the fashion of their vanishing.

In Rajputana, however, they remained, and so highly were they respected that Akbar, the magnanimous Musalmān emperor, issued an edict that no animals should be killed in the neighbourhood of Jaina temples.

The Jainas are divided, we may add, into two great sects—the Digambaras, known in the fourth century B.C., and mentioned in one of Ashoka's edicts; the Shvetāmbaras, apparently more modern. The latter are now by far the more numerous, but it is said that the Digambaras possess far vaster libraries of ancient literature than does the rival sect. ✓

Leave that historical side; let us now turn to their philosophic teaching. They assert two fundamental existences, the root, the origin, of all that is, of Samsāra; these are uncreated, eternal. One is Jīva or Ātmā, pure consciousness, knowledge, the Knower, and when the Jīva has transcended *Avidyā*, ignorance, then he realizes himself as the pure knowledge that he is by nature, and is manifested as the Knower of all that is. ✓ ✓

On the other hand Dravya, substance, that which is knowable; the Knower and the Knowable opposed one to the other, Jīva and Dravya. But Dravya is to be ✓ thought of as always connected with *guna*, quality. With Dravya is not only *guna*, quality, but *paryāya*, modification.

"Substance is the substrate of qualities; the qualities are inherent in one substance; but the characteristic of developments is that they inhere in either.

"Dharma, Adharma, space, time, matter and souls (are the six kinds of substances), they make up this world, as has been taught by the Jinas who possess the best knowledge."[1]

Here you have the basis of all Samsāra; the Knower and the Knowable, Jīva and Dravya with its qualities and its modifications. This makes up all. Out of these principles came many deductions I may give you, perhaps, one, taken from a Gāthā of Kundācārya, which will show a line of thought not unfamiliar to the Hindu. Of everything, they say, you can declare that it is, that it is not, that it is and is not. I take their own example, the familiar jar. If you think of the jar as *paryāya*, modification, then before that jar is produced, you will say: "*syānnāsti*," it is not. But if you think of it as substance, as Dravya, then it is always existing, and you will say of it: "*syādasti*," it is; but you can say of it as Dravya and Paryāya, it is not and it is, and sum up the whole of it in a single phrase: "*syādasti nāsti*"; it is and it is not.[2] Familiar line of reasoning enough.

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[1] *Uttarādhyayana*, XXVIII. 6, 7. Translated from the Prakrit by Hermann Jacobi.

[2] *Report on the Search for Sanskrit MSS.*, by Dr. Bhandarkar, p. 95.

We can find dozens, scores and hundreds of illustrations of this way of looking at the universe, wearisome, perhaps, to the ordinary man, but illuminative and necessary to the metaphysician and the philosopher.

Then we come to the growth, or rather the unfolding, of the Jīva. The Jīva evolves, it is taught, by reincarnation and by karma; "The universe is peopled by manifold creatures who are in this Samsāra, born in different families and castes for having done various actions. Sometimes they go to the worlds of the gods, sometimes to the hells, sometimes they become Asuras, in accordance with their actions. Thus living beings of sinful actions who are born again and again in ever-recurring births, are not disgusted with Samsāra."[1] It teaches exactly as you read in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that the human being goes downwards by evil action; by mixed good and evil he will be born as a man; or, if purified, will be born as a Deva. Exactly on these lines the Jaina teaches. It is by many births, by innumerable experiences, the Jīva begins to liberate himself from the bonds of action. We are told that there are three jewels, like the three *ratnas* that we so often hear of among the Buddhists; and these are said to be right knowledge, right faith, right conduct, a fourth being added for ascetics: "Learn the true road leading to final deliverance, which the Jinas have taught; it depends on four causes, and is characterized by right knowledge and faith. I. Right knowledge; II. Faith; III. Conduct; IV. Austerities. This is the road taught by the Jinas who possess the best knowldge."[2] By right knowledge and right faith and right conduct the Jīva evolves, and in the later stages, to these are added austerities, by which he finally frees himself from the bonds of rebirth. Right knowledge is defined as being that which I have just said to you with regard to Samsāra; and the difference of Jīva and Dravya, and the six kinds of substances, Dharma, Adharma, space, time, matter, soul; he must also know the nine truths: Jīva, soul; *ajīva*, the inanimate things; *bandha*, the binding of the soul by karma; *punya*, merit; *pāpa*, demerit; *āsrāva*, that which causes the soul to be affected by sins; *samvara*, the prevention of *āsrāva* by watchfulness; the annihilation of *karma*; final deliverance; these are the nine truths.[1]

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[1] *Uttarādhyayana*, III. 2, 3, 5.

[2] Ibid., XXVIII. 1, 2.

Then we find a definition as to right conduct. Right conduct, which is *sarāga*, with desire, leads to Svarga heaven—or it leads to becoming a Deva, or it leads to the sovereignty of the Devas, Asuras and men, but not to liberation. But the right conduct which is *vītarāga*, free from desire, that, and that alone, will lead to final liberation. As we still follow the course of the Jīva, we find him throwing aside *moha*, delusion, *rāga*, desire, *dvesha*, hatred, and of course their opposites, for the one cannot be thrown off without the other; until at last he becomes the Jīva complete and perfect, purified from all evil, omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent, the whole universe reflected in himself as in a mirror, pure consciousness, "with the powers of the senses, though without the senses"; pure consciousness, the knower, the Supreme.

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[1] *Uttarādhyayana*, XXVIII. 14.

Such then is a brief outline of the views, the philosophic views, of the Jainas, acceptable surely to every Hindu, for on almost every point you will find practically the same idea, though put sometimes in a somewhat different form.

Let us look more closely at right conduct, for here the Jaina practice becomes specially interesting; and wise are many of his ways, in dealing especially with the life of the layman. Jainas are divided into two great bodies: the layman, who is called a shrāvaka, and the ascetic, the Yati. These have different rules of conduct in this sense only, that the Yati carries to perfection that for which the layman is only preparing himself in future births. The five vows of the Yati, which I will deal with in a moment, are also binding on the layman to a limited extent. To take a single instance: the vow of Brahmacharya, that on the Yati imposes of course absolute celibacy, in the layman means only temperance and proper chastity in the life of a Grihastha. In this way the vows, we may say, run side by side, of *ahimsa*, harmlessness, *sūnriti*, truthfulness, *asteya*, not taking that which is not one's own, uprightness, honesty, *brahmacharya*, and finally *aparigraha*, not grasping at anything, absence of greed —in the case of the layman meaning that he is not to be covetous, or full of desire; in the case of the Yati meaning of course that he renounces everything and knows nothing as "mine," "my own". These five vows, then, rule the life of the Jaina.

Very, very marked is his translation of the word *ahimsa*, harmlessness: "thou shalt not kill." So far does he carry it in his life, to such an extreme, that it passes sometimes almost beyond the bounds of virtue; passes, a harsh critic might say, into absurdity; but I am not willing to say so, but rather to see in it the protest against the carelessness of animal life and animal suffering, which is but too widely spread among men; a protest, I admit, carried to excess, all sense of proportion being lost, the life of the insect, the gnat, sometimes being treated as though it were higher than the life of a human being. But still, perhaps, that may be pardoned, when we think of the extremes of the cruelty to which so many permit themselves to go; and although a smile may sometimes come when we hear of breathing only through a cloth, as the Yati does, as he breathes continually touching the lips that nothing living may go into the lungs; straining all water and most unscientifically boiling it—which really kills creatures, which if water remained unboiled would remain alive—the smile will be a loving one, for the tenderness is beautiful.

Listen for a moment to what was said by a Jina, and would to God that all men would take it as a rule of life: "The venerable One has declared . . . As is my pain when I am knocked or struck with a stick, bow, fist, clod, or potsherd; or menaced, beaten, burned, tormented, or deprived of life; and as I feel every pain and agony, from death down to the pulling out of a hair; in the same way, be sure of this, all kinds of beings feel the same pain and agony, etc. as I, when living they are ill-treated in the same way. For this reason all sorts of living beings should not be beaten, nor treated with violence, nor abused, nor tormented, nor deprived of life. I say the Arhats and Bhagavats of the past, present and future, all say thus, speak thus, declare thus, explain thus; all sorts of living beings should not be slain, nor treated with violence, nor abused, nor tormented, nor driven away. This constant, permanent, eternal, true law has been taught by wise men who comprehend all things."[1]

If that were the rule for every one, how different would India be; no beaten and abused animal; no struggling, suffering creature; and for my part, I can look almost with sympathy even on the Jaina exaggeration, that has a basis so noble, so compassionate; and I would that the feeling of love, though not the exaggeration, should rule in all Indian hearts of every faith today.

Then we have the strict rule that no intoxicating drug or drink may be touched; nothing like bhang, opium, alcohol; of course nothing of this kind is allowed; even so far as honey and butter does the law of forbidden food go, because in the gaining of honey the lives of bees are too often sacrificed, and so on. Then we find in the daily life of the Jaina rules laid down for the layman as to how he is to begin and end every day:

"He must rise very very early in the morning and then he must repeat silently his mantras, counting its repetition on his fingers; and then he has to say to himself, what am I, who is my Ishtadeva, who is my Gurudeva, what is my religion, what should I do, what should I not do?" This is the beginning of each day, the reckoning up of life as it were; careful, self-conscious recognition of life. Then he is to think of the Tirthamkaras, and then he is to make certain vows. Now these vows are peculiar, as far as I know, peculiar to the

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[1] *Uttarādhyayana*, Bk. II. I. 48, 49.

Jainas, and they have an object which is praiseworthy and most useful. A man at his own discretion makes some small vow on a thing absolutely unimportant. He will say in the morning: " During this day "—I will take an extreme case given to me by a Jaina—" during this day I will not sit down more than a certain number of times"; or he will say: " For a week I will not eat such and such a vegetable"; or he will say: " For a week, or ten days, or a month, I will keep an hour's silence during the day." You may say: Why? In order that the man may always be self-conscious, and never lose his control over the body. That is the reason that was given me by my Jaina friend, and I thought it an extremely sensible one.

From young boyhood a boy is taught to make such promises, and the result is that it checks thoughtlessness, it checks excitement, it checks that continual carelessness, which is one of the great banes of human life. A boy thus educated is not careless. He always thinks before he speaks or acts; his body is taught to follow the mind and not to go before the mind, as it does too often. How often do people say: " If I had thought, I would not have done it; if I had considered, I would never have acted thus; if I had thought for a moment that foolish word would not have been spoken, and that harsh speech would never have been uttered, that discourteous action would never have been done." If you train yourself from childhood never to speak without thinking, never to act without thinking, see how unconsciously the body would learn to follow the mind, and without struggle and effort, carelessness would be destroyed. Of course there are far more serious vows than these taken by the layman as to fasting, strict and severe, every detail carefully laid down in the rules, in the books. But I was telling you a point that you would not so readily find in the books, so far as I know and that seemed to me to be characteristic and useful. Let me add that when you meet Jainas you will find them, as a rule, what you might expect from this training—quiet, self-controlled, dignified, rather silent, rather reserved.[1]

Pass from the layman to the ascetic, the Yati. Their rules are very strict. Much of fasting, carried to an extraordinary extent, just like the fasting of the great ascetics of the Hindu. There are both men and women ascetics among the sect known as the Shvetāmbaras; among the Digambaras there are no female ascetics and their views of women are perhaps not on the whole very complimentary. Among the Shvetāmbaras, however, there are female ascetics as well as male, under the same strict rules of begging, of renouncing of property; but one very wise rule is that the ascetic must not renounce things without which progress cannot be made. Therefore he must not renounce the body; he must beg food enough to support it, because only in the human body can he gain liberation. He must not renounce the Guru, because without the teaching of the Guru he cannot tread the narrow razor path; nor discipline, for if he renounce that, progress would be impossible; nor the study of the Sūtras, for that also is needed for his evolution; but outside these four things—the body, the Guru, discipline, study—there must be nothing of which he can say: "it is mine." Says a teacher: "He should not speak unasked, and asked he should not tell a lie; he should not give way to his anger, and should bear with indifference, pleasant and unpleasant occurrences. Subdue your self, for the self is difficult to subdue; if your self is subdued, you will be happy in this world and in the next."[1]

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[1] The details here given are mostly from the *Jainatattvādarsha*, by Muni Atmārāmji, and were translated from the Prākrit for me by my friend Govinda Dasa.

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The female ascetics, living under the same strict rule of conduct, have one duty which it seems to me is of the very wisest provision; it is the duty of female ascetics to visit all the Jaina households, and to see that the Jaina women, the wives and the daughters, are properly educated, properly instructed. They lay great stress on the education of the women, and one great work of the female ascetic is to give that education and to see that it is carried out. There is a point that I think the Hindu might well borrow from the Jaina, so that the Hindu women might be taught without the chance of losing their ancestral faith, or suffering interference with their own religion, taught by ascetics of their own creed. Surely no vocation can be nobler, surely it would be an advantage to Hinduism.

And then how is the ascetic to die? By starvation. He is not to wait until death touches him; but when he has reached that point where in that body he can make no further progress, when he has reached that limit of the body, he is to put it aside and pass out of the world by death by voluntary starvation.

Such is a brief and most imperfect account of a noble religion, of a great faith which is practically, we may say, on almost all points, at one with the Hindu; and so much is this the case that in Northern India the Jaina and the Hindu Vaishyas intermarry and interdine. They do not regard themselves as of different religions, and in the Hindu college we have Jaina students, Jaina boarders, who live with their Hindu brothers, and are thus from the time of childhood helping to draw closer and closer together the bonds of love and of brotherhood.

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[1] *Uttarādhyayana*, I. 14, 15.

I spoke to you previously about nation-building, and reminded you that here in India we must build our nation out of the men of many faiths. With Jainas no difficulty can well arise, save by the bigotry that we find alike among the less instructed of every creed, which it is the duty of the wiser, the more thoughtful, the more religious, the more spiritual, to gradually lessen. Let every man in his own faith teach the ignorant to love and not to hate. Let him lay stress on the points that unite us, and not on the points that separate us. Let every man in his daily life speak never a word of harshness for any faith, but words of love to all. For in thus doing we are not only serving God, but also serving man; we are not only serving religion, we are also serving India, the common Motherland of all; all are Indians, all are children of India, all must have their places in the Indian nation of the future. Then let us, my brothers, strive to do our part in the building, if it be but by bringing one small brick of love to the mighty edifice of brotherhood; and let no man who takes the name of a Theosophist, a lover of the Divine Wisdom, ever dare to say one word of harshness as regards one faith that God has given to man, for they all come from Him, to Him they all return, and what have we to do with quarrelling by the way?

[illegible] is the case that in Northern India the Jains and the Hindu Vaishyas intermarry and interdine. They do not regard themselves as of different religions, and in the Hindu College we have Jaina students, Jaina boarders, who live with their Hindu brothers, and are thus from the time of childhood helping to draw closer and closer together the bonds of love and of brotherhood. [illegible] as I began [illegible] about mutual toleration, and [illegible] that [illegible] in India we must build our [illegible] out of the men of many faiths. With Jainas no [illegible] can arise, [illegible] the theory that we find [illegible] of every creed, whom it [illegible] the more thoughtful, the more [illegible] the more spiritual, to [illegible]. Let [illegible] be taught [illegible] to love [illegible]. Let [illegible] on the points that [illegible] that separate us. Let [illegible] daily [illegible] love [illegible] [illegible] we are also [illegible], the common Motherland [illegible] all are [illegible] children of India, all must [illegible] the [illegible] of the future. [illegible] of us [illegible] part in the building, [illegible] by bringing one small [illegible] of love to the mighty [illegible] of brotherhood; and let no man who takes the name of a Theosophist, a lover of the Divine Wisdom, [illegible] one word of [illegible] that God has given to men, [illegible] they all come from [illegible] Him they all return, and what [illegible] we [illegible] do [illegible] travelling by the way?

BUDDHISM

A CONVENTION LECTURE

BUDDHISM

THE religion known as Buddhism is the religion which has the largest number of adherents in the world. Despite all difficulties of accurate statistics we may take it that about one-third of the human race follow the teachings of the Buddha, and in the West a very large amount of attention has been drawn to these teachings by the devoted work of a number of Orientalists who have been fascinated by the charm of the Buddha himself, by the purity, by the elevation of his teachings. For many reasons into which I cannot now go in detail, Buddhism has greater attraction for the Western mind than either Hinduism or Zoroastrianism—Buddhism especially in the form in which it is taught in the southern Church. The northern Church—Buddhism as it is found in Tibet and China—is so closely allied to Hinduism in its teaching as to the gods, as to the continuing Ego, as to the life after death, as to rites and ceremonies, as to the use of Sanskrit mantras, that it has less attraction for the Westerner. For you must remember that the Westerner has a mind which is essentially practical rather than metaphysical, and that he is inclined to be repulsed by much talk about the invisible world, and by much teaching which refers to the more mystic side of religion. In the southern Church this mystic side in course of time has apparently disappeared to a very great extent, at least so far as the translations are concerned that the Europeans possess. Books which deal with the more mystic side are not yet translated, and therefore are not before the Western[1] public. What they recognize as Buddhism is a system of wonderful ethics, couched in the most beautiful and in the most poetical language; they recognize in it these moral teachings coupled with rare liberality of thought, with the constant appeal to the reason, with the constant attempt to justify and render intelligible the foundations on which the morals are built; and this appeals very strongly to the minds of many Westerners, who have turned aside from the cruder presentments of religion that are current in Europe, and who seek in Buddhism a refuge from the complete scepticism to which otherwise they would feel themselves doomed.

Now with regard to the teachings of Buddhism, I shall found myself on the Buddhist scriptures themselves, for that is the fairest way of dealing with a faith; and then, as always, looking at these in the light of occult knowledge, I shall try to show you how consistent they are with the noblest teachings of other faiths, with the essential truths of religion, and how it is very largely owing to misconception, to misrepresentation, to the small extent, we may say, to which some of the later disciples have expounded the teachings of the Buddha—it is largely in consequence of these misconceptions and omissions that in the land which was his birthplace, amongst the people to whom by race he belonged, his doctrines are now looked upon with so much of suspicion, and scarcely any are found to accept his teachings, or willing to call themselves by his name. Daughter of Hinduism, Buddhism most undoubtedly is, daughter of the ancient faith, born in comparatively modern times, and if rightly read the Buddhist Scriptures are the echo of the Hindu Scriptures, and the teachings—though often thrown into a less metaphysical and a more directly practical form—are teachings that are penetrated with the Hindu spirit, as indeed you might expect, remembering the lips that spake them. The form into which they were thrown is specially adapted for spreading these truths outside the limits of India itself, a form which, by the foreknowledge of the Buddha, was made to carry the teachings of the purest Hindu morality into many a country outside the limits within which Hinduism would be taught, intended to spread it through populations less keenly metaphysical and less intellectual than those of the Hindu people. We find here, the fundamental verities, though the form into which they are thrown is simpler, and is in many ways perhaps more directly practical. The mission of the Buddha—while it began in India with the hope perchance that the whole work might go on in harmony and without disruption—was intended to carry the light of truth to other peoples, a mission that has been triumphantly fulfilled, and that, we may hope, will continue to be fulfilled for many an age to come.

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[1] Since these lectures were given many have been translated.

Now the essential teachings of the Buddha are contained in the three great divisions of Buddhist sacred literature, the three Pitakas, or baskets, as they are called. The first of this is the *Vinaya*, and contains all the rules laid down for the monastic order that he established, the famous Sangha, the guardian and repository of His religion. In addition to the rules of discipline, we have also in this *Vinaya* a large number of teachings given by the Buddha, more mystical in their character than those of some of the other volumes; being specially intended for the training of the monastic order, specially intended for the teaching of the disciples, these books speak out more plainly as to the invisible world than do some others; they give out more fully what is regarded by the materializing West as the legendary side of Buddhism; but this is really a true and essential part of Buddhist teaching, and, as was said long afterwards by Nāgārjuna: "'Every Buddha has both a revealed and a mystic doctrine.' The exoteric is for the multitude of new disciples. The esoteric is for the Bodhisattvas and advanced pupils, such as Kāshyapa. It is not communicated in the form of definite language, and could not, therefore, be transmitted by Ānanda, as definite doctrine among the Sūtras. Yet it is virtually contained in the Sūtras. For instance, the *Fa-hwa-king*, or 'Sūtra of the Lotus of the Good Law', which is regarded as containing the cream of the revealed doctrine, is to be viewed as a sort of original document of the esoteric teaching, while it is in form exoteric."[1] When the Buddha was seventy-one years of age, he expounded the esoteric doctrine in answer to the questions put to him by his great disciple Kāshyapa, and although, as J. Edkins says, this doctrine could not be fully put into language—for always the esoteric doctrine, being spiritual, is beyond intellectual language—none the less can it be deduced from the Sūtras.

The second of these three Pitakas consists of Sūtras, or Suttas, as they are generally called—because the Buddha is supposed to have spoken in Prākrit, the common dialect derived from Sanskrit, which is now called Pāli. The Suttas form that part of the Buddha's teachings which were given to the people, his ethical teachings, and discussions, disputations, questionings, explanations, arising out of them, and out of circumstances that he met with in his daily life. Here are the great records of the life and teachings of the Buddha, showing that life as it was lived in India, and those teachings as they fell from his sacred lips. The third Pitaka is the *Abhidhamma*, of which very little is known at present in the West. It is said to be full of mysticism, and to contain the Buddhist philosophy as apart from the Buddhist ethics. But that I must leave on one side, as unreachable by us, and there is plenty of matter in the other two Pitakas to take up very much more than all the time at our disposal.[1]

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[1] Chinese Buddhism, by Rev. J. Edkins, p. 43.

In considering how I should lay this great teaching before you, what would be the form which would make it at once most attractive and most instructive, I decided that it would be best to put it in the way that we may say originally came to the people who listened to the Buddha himself, for his teaching is so interwoven with his life, its beauty and its fascination depend so largely on the One who uttered it, and on the marvellous perfection of that many-sided life, that to describe it as a mere dry system, apart from the life of the Blessed One, seems to deprive it of its inspiring force, to deprive it of its greatest influence over the lives of man.

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[1] Dr. Rhys Davids says: "The books, as we have them, were put into their present shape . . . in the century or two after the death of Gotama" (*Buddhism*). At the Council of Rajagriha under Kāshyapa and Ānanda, held immediately after the death of the Buddha, "Buddhism" may be said to have been organized. At the second Council, that of Vaishāli, under Yashas and Revata, held 377 B.C., the dissentients rejected the Abhidhamma, but the disputes it was called to settle were merely on certain points in the Discipline of the Sangha. The third Council, under Ashoka, at Pātaliputta in 242 B.C., again left the Pitakas unchallenged, so that we may fairly take them as representing accurately the doctrines of the great Teacher.

Let me remind you, at the very outset, of the way in which the Buddha is looked upon, alike by his own disciples, by every occultist, and by every one who knows anything of the invisible world, and of the way in which the position of a Buddha is gained. Many a hundred incarnations went before that final incarnation in which the illumination of the Buddha was attained. Step by step he climbed up the long ladder of existence; life after life of self-sacrifice and devotion led him from earthly manhood to divine humanity, from divine humanity to the position of a Bodhisattva, from the position of a Bodhisattva to that of a Buddha. The Buddha is said to have perfected His vow *kalpa* after *kalpa*. Immeasurable ages of innumerable lives lay behind him ere he was born in the town of Kapilavastu, in the palace of the King, born for his last birth upon this planet, born to reach the perfect illumination, and to become one of the series of supreme Teachers of Gods and men.

In the valley of the Ganga, about a hundred miles to the north-east of the sacred city of Vārāṇasī, this child was born, and it is said, and truly said, that all nature rejoiced over his birth-hour, knowing the work he had come to accomplish in the world. It is said that Devas showered flowers on the mother and the child, that the rejoicing shook all the worlds of Gods and men, for the child that was born was to be a mighty teacher, the instructor of myriads and myriads of the human race. The date of his birth is put by the Sinhalese at 623 B.C.; at 685 B.C. by the Siamese.[1] He was named by his parents Siddhārtha, "He who has accomplished his purpose"; that name was given because of a prophecy made by a great Brāhmana soon after his birth, that the child should be a mighty teacher and an enlightener of the nations of the earth. He grew up during his youth apparently in ignorance of his mighty destiny. It is a strange problem that has pressed on many minds how it is that with some of the greatest who are born into the world, the knowledge of their own greatness is for a time veiled. You may remember it was the same with Rāma. He did not in his early days show any knowledge that he was an Avatāra of the Supreme; he was taught by Vashishtha, and from him received in his then body the knowledge of true Yoga. So also with the Buddha; as we trace him through the beautiful life he led as a boy, as a youth, up to the date of his marriage with his cousin, and for still a year or two afterwards, we see him leading indeed a noble, a beautiful and a pure life, but a life that did not apparently recognize its own greatness, with the mind turned to the invisible world but not yet realizing its mission nor the part it had to play.

We read how his father, longing that he should be the King of earth rather than the monarch over millions of minds of men in the spiritual world, tried to keep back from him the knowledge of the suffering that was going on in the world around. He environed him on all sides with all that was fair and delightful, in order that the knowledge of the sorrow of the world might be shut out from his eyes. We read how, by the guiding of a Deva, he was led to go forth from his palace and the pleasure-garden that surrounded it, and driving in his chariot he met four men who gave him the first touch of the awakening. First, he met a man who was aged, and up till this time he had never seen but the young; he asked what was this man, half-blind, tottering, and palsied, with a wrinkled face, with weakness in every limb; and his charioteer answered, he was an aged man, and that to all that were born into the world age must come in time. He met a man suffering from horrible disease; he had seen nothing but health and beauty, and he asked what was this; the charioteer told him, this is disease, under which many of the children of men must suffer. He saw a corpse, he who had seen nothing but the living, and he asked what was this; and the charioteer said, it is death, to which all who are living must come. And lastly he met an ascetic, calm, serene, and peaceful, full of happiness, full of peace, and he asked how it was that in a world where there were disease and death this man could walk through the world serene. He was answered that this man had a life beyond the life of men, a life fixed in the eternal; hence his peace, his serenity, his calm in the midst of sorrow.

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[1] Dr. Rhys Davids says it "may be fixed approximately at about 600 B.C." *Buddhism*, p. 20.

Going back to his palace the prince reflected, and from his lips broke forth the cry: " Full of hindrance is this household life, the haunt of passion; free as the air is the homeless state." That idea fastened on him—the contrast between the haunt of passion and the homeless man; until at last, rising in the night when wife and child were sleeping beside him, he bent over the young wife, beautiful in her sleep, and over the babe that lay beside her in the first tenderness of its youth, and touching them not, lest he should awaken them and their cry should shake his purpose, he went forth from the palace of his father, he called his faithful charioteer to bring his horse, and went through the silent sleeping city, through the quiet streets of the deserted town, until, coming to the gates of the city, he dismounted from his horse, gave it to the charioteer and bade him lead it back to the palace. He then stripped off his princely garments, cut off his hair, and went forth alone, homeless, to seek for the cause of human sorrow and for its cure. He who was to be the Buddha could not live in joy and happiness in the palace of the King, while men outside were suffering, were agonizing and were dying; he went out to seek the cause of the suffering, and the cure which he might bring to human woe.

Then we trace him in the search he made after divine wisdom. First going to great recluses, to Arāda Kalāma and Uḍdaka, he tried to learn from them the secret; they were learned in philosophy, in religion, and he sought to learn from them the cause and the cure of sorrow. He studied the mysteries of philosophy, he sat at their feet learning all the intricacies of metaphysics, and at last, despairing, he arose, feeling that not there was the cure of sorrow, not by mere intellectual learning should the salvation of men be found. Going onwards, he met five ascetics, and for six years he gave himself to the ascetic life, practising penances greater than any other practised, reducing his food at last to a mere grain a day, until finally he fell, emaciated, fainting and helpless, worn out by the rigour of his austerities. A passing girl, Nandā, brought him rice and milk; He took the food and arose refreshed, and when his comrades saw that he had taken food, they turned from him, saying: "This ascetic is going back to the world, he is weary of austerity and is unworthy of the sacred vocation." And they left him, and again he went forth alone, to find in solitude the secret of human woe.

As he was wandering on his ways, the time approached when illumination was to be found. Reaching Gayā, he sat down beneath the sacred Ashvattha tree, saying that he would never rise from his seat until light had dawned upon his spirit and the secret of sorrow was found. He sat there patiently, and all the hosts of Māra, the evil ones, assailed him with temptations of pleasure and with threats of pain; all the Asuras gathered round him, seeking to shake his constancy and to modify his determination. He sat, clad in the garment of pure resolution, untouched, unshaken, even when the image of his weeping wife appeared before him, with outstretched arms pleading that he would turn his face backward to the world again. At last in the silent hour the illumination came. As he sat beneath the sacred tree, there dawned on him the light which he had been born into the world to discover. There came to him that mighty awakening which made him the Enlightened, the Buddha, which told him of sorrow, of the cause of sorrow, of the cure of sorrow, of the path which leads beyond it. Buddhahood was achieved, a Saviour of the world was there. And then there broke from his lips the song triumphant, that must be familiar to many amongst you: "Looking for the maker of this tabernacle, I shall have to run through a course of many births, so long as I do not find (him); and painful is birth again and again. But now, maker of the tabernacle, thou hast been seen; thou shalt not make up this tabernacle again. All thy rafters are broken, thy ridge-pole is sundered; the mind, approaching the Eternal, has attained to the extinction of all desires."[1]

That was the secret of the Buddha—that by the extinction of desires man rises to peace. Under the tree of wisdom he had seen the sorrow of the world, its cause in desire, its end in the ending of desire, and the noble eightfold path which led out of it into peace eternal. Seeing it for himself and for the race, he passed into Nirvāna, the uncreated, the passionless, the all-embracing. And when the Blessed One had thus entered into Nirvāna, he sat beneath the Bodhi tree for seven days, "enjoying the bliss of emancipation."[2]

During the night closing the seventh day, he "fixed his mind upon the chain of causation" and traced the evolution of the universe, expressing it in the twelve Nidānas, the succession of which shows the order of the stages, until we reach the suffering we find around us; the first is *avidyā*, "ignorance," i.e. limitation, the primary cause—because without this limitation in All-Consciousness, by the action of the Supreme, no universe, no variety, can arise. From *avidyā* come the *samkhāras*, from these consciousness, then name and form, then the six powers of perception, from these contact, from contact sensation, from sensation desire, from desire attachment, from attachment "Existence"—i.e. personality—from this birth, and from birth decay, with all the sorrows of life.[1] These form the evolutionary chain, and, properly understood and unfolded, contain the whole philosophy of the evolving universe, and its returning path.

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[1] *Dhammapada*, 153, 154. Sacred Books of the East, vol. 10, translated by Max Müller.

[2] *Mahāvagga*, I. 1. 7. The account of this period may be read in the Sacred Books of the East, vol. 13, *Vinaya Texts*, translated from the Pāli by Drs. Rhys Davids and Oldenburg. Or, as regards the teaching of the Bhikkhus, it will be found in vol. 11, *Buddhist Suttas*, translated by Dr. Rhys Davids, in *Dhamma-chakka-ppavattana-sutta*.

Arising from his seat under the Bodhi tree, the Buddha sat under a banyan tree for another seven days, at the end of which, in answer to a Brāhmana, he spoke words that explain his whole attitude to Brāhmanas: "That Brāhmana who has removed (from himself) all sinfulness, who is free from haughtiness, free from impurity, self-restrained, who is an accomplished master of knowledge [or of the Veda], who has fulfilled the duties of holiness, such a Brāhmana may justly call himself a Brāhmana, whose behaviour is uneven to nothing in the world."[2]

For two more periods of seven days each, the Buddha sat under two other trees, and then he took food from two merchants, who became his first disciples. Returning to his seat under the banyan tree, a strange scene occurred. "In the mind of the Blessed One, who was alone, and had retired into solitude, the following thought arose: ‘I have penetrated this doctrine which is profound, difficult to perceive and to understand, which brings quietude of heart, which is exalted, which is unattainable by reasoning, abstruse, intelligible [only] to the wise.[1] This people, on the other hand, is given to desire, intent upon desire, delighting in desire. To this people, therefore, who are given to desire, intent upon desire, delighting in desire, the law of causality and the chain of causation will be a matter difficult to understand; most difficult for them to understand will be also the extinction of all *samkhāras*, the getting rid of all the substrata [of existence], the destruction of desire, the absence of passion, quietude of heart, Nirvāna. Now if I proclaim the doctrine, and other men are not able to understand my preaching, there would result but weariness and annoyance to me.’ And then the following. . . . . .stanzas, unheard before, occurred to the Blessed One: ‘With great pains have I acquired it. Enough! Why should I now proclaim it? The doctrine will not be easy to understand to beings that are lost in lust and hatred. Given to lust, surrounded with thick darkness, they will not see what is repugnant [to their minds], abstruse, profound, difficult to perceive and subtle.” [2]

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[1] Ibid., 2.

[2] Ibid., II. 2.

At this crisis Brahmā Sahampati (the third LOGOS of our chain) intervened, seeing that “the mind of the Tathāgata, of the holy, of the absolute Sambuddha inclines itself to remain in quiet, and not to preach the doctrine." He tells the Buddha that some will understand and reminds him of the suffering earth: "Look down, all-seeing One, upon the people lost in suffering, overcome by birth and decay, thou who hast freed thyself from suffering! Arise, O hero, O victorious One! Wander through the world, O Leader of the pilgrim band,[1] who thyself art free from debt. May the Blessed One preach the doctrine; there will be people who can understand it!" And so he looked on the world, with the eye of a Buddha, full of compassion, and saying: "Wide open is the door of the immortal to all who have ears to hear; let them send forth faith to meet it. The Dhamma sweet and good I spake not, Brahmā, despairing of the weary task, to men."[2]

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[1] Yet people fancy that Buddhism is a simple ethical system, founded wholly on reason, and capable of being grasped in its entirety by the unspiritual!

[2] Ibid., V. 2, 3.

He then arose, and whither did he go, to commence his beneficent mission? He went to the sacred city whence spiritual missions have ever started in India; he went to Kāshī, to the holy spot whence the spiritual life of India has ever taken its rise; and there in Isipatana, in the deer-park of the city of Vārānasī, he set rolling the wheel of the Law. Here were dwelling the five ascetics who had turned their backs on him. To them he went, and announcing himself as Sambuddha, he told them that the two extremes of self-indulgence and of constant self-mortification were alike profitless, and that, avoding these, he had trodden "the middle path, which leads to insight, which leads to wisdom, which conduces to calm, to knowledge, to the *sambodhi*,[3] to Nirvāna." This middle path is the holy or noble eightfold path, the fourth of the "Four Noble Truths." It is: Right Belief, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Endeavour, Right Memory, Right Meditation. He then expounded to them the other three Truths He had seen under the Bodhi tree: "This, O Bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth of Suffering: birth is suffering; decay is suffering; illness is suffering; death is suffering; presence of objects we hate is suffering; separation from objects we love is suffering; not to obtain what we desire is suffering. Briefly, the fivefold clinging[1] to existence is suffering. This, O Bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth of the cause of suffering: thirst that leads to rebirth, accompanied by pleasure and lust, finding its delights here and there; [this thirst is threefold] namely, thirst for pleasure, thirst for existence, thirst for prosperity. This, O Bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth of the cessation of suffering; [it ceases with] the complete cessation of this thirst—a cessation which consists in the absence of every passion—with the abandoning of this thirst, with the doing away with it, with the deliverance from it, with the destruction of desire."

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[1] The hosts of reincarnating Egos, held in debt by Karma.
[2] Ibid., 4-10.
[3] All-knowledge.

When the "supreme wheel of the empire of Truth" was thus set rolling, it is recorded that all the Devas, beginning with those of the earth and passing to the seventh, or highest, world, shouted with joy, and cried that none could ever again turn back the wheel.[2]

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[1] Clinging to the five elements of existence which make the transitory self, the five sheaths.

[2] The absurd modern idea that a Buddha could deny the existence of the gods had not then been born, and all the early records are full of their co-operation and rejoicings.

Yet further he explained to them the difference between the Self and the not-Self, in words that should for ever have made impossible the contention that he taught that there was no continuing life in man: "The body [rūpa], O Bhikkhus, is not the Self. . . Sensation, O Bhikkhus, is not the Self. . . Perception is not the Self. . . The *samkhāras* are not the Self. . . Consciousness is not the Self." Defining each more fully, he declares of each that it "is not mine, is not me, is not my Self; thus it should be remembered by right knowledge according to the truth." And he concludes: "Considering this, O Bhikkhus, a learned, noble hearer of the word becomes weary of body, weary of sensation, weary of perception, weary of the *samkhāras*, weary of consciousness. Becoming weary of all that, he divests himself of passion; by absence of passion he is made free; when he is free, he becomes aware that he is free; and he realizes that rebirth is exhausted; that holiness is completed; that duty is fulfilled: that there is no further return to this world."[1]

From this time forth, the Lord Buddha preached his doctrine, and men and women became enlightened, obtaining, as he taught, "the pure and spotless Eye of the Truth," the knowledge that all that has a beginning must have an ending; then they surrendered all worldly things and became Bhikkhus, mendicants, putting on the yellow robe, carrying the alms-bowl, taking refuge in the Buddha, in his doctrine and his Order. And the

[1] Ibid., VI. Every student will recognize here the *koshas* of the Vedanta, noting that the *samkhāras* represent the Pranamayakosha, sensation and perception the Manomayakosha; the fifth Ānandamayakosha, is not mentioned, for that film of bliss is not lost even in the Turīya state,obtaining which a man returneth not.

Order grew and multiplied, and after a while the Lord sent out his disciples to teach, and gave them authority to admit to the Sangha (the Order) those who sought entrance, on the triple declaration thrice repeated: "I take my refuge in the Buddha. I take my refuge in the Dhamma. I take my refuge in the Sangha."[1]

Dr. Rhys Davids—who is so fascinated by the ethical life of Buddhism, and who so utterly and so strangely resents its inner spirits, and declares that in Buddhist teaching there is no continuing Ego, no development of the eternal and spiritual nature of man—gives us from Buddhagosha's commentary on the first of the Dialogues a most attractive picture of the daily round of that holy life. "The Blessed One used to rise up early (i.e. about 5 A.M.), and, out of consideration for his personal attendant, was wont to wash and dress himself, without calling for any assistance. Then, till it was time to go on his round for alms, he would retire to a solitary place and meditate. When that time arrived, he would dress himself completely in the three robes (which every member of the Order wore in public), take his bowl in his hand and, sometimes alone, sometimes attended by his followers, would enter the neighbouring village or town for alms, sometimes in an ordinary way, sometimes wonders happening," recounted at length. Then people would come out and pray him to accept his food from them, and he would sit down and eat. "Then would the Blessed One, when the meal was done, discourse to them, with due regard to their capacity for spiritual things, in such a way that some would take the layman's vow, and some would enter on the paths, and some would reach the highest fruit thereof. And when he had thus had mercy on the multitude, he would arise from his seat and depart to the place where he had lodged. And when he had come there, he would sit in the open verandah, awaiting the time when the rest of his followers should also have finished their meal." Then, standing at the door of his room, he would speak a few words of exhortation, and at the request of any disciple would "suggest a subject for meditation, suitable to the spiritual capacity of each."

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[1] Ibid. XIII. 3. 41.

The disciples departing to meditate, the Buddha would rest awhile, and "when his body was rested he would arise from the couch and for a space consider the circumstances of the people near that he might do them good. And at the fall of the day, the folk from the neighbouring villages or town would gather together at the place where he was lodging, bringing with them offerings of flowers. And to them, seated in the lecture hall, would he, in a manner suitable to the occasion, and suitable to their beliefs, discourse on the Truth." Dismissing them, at the close of the day, he would sometimes bathe, and then sit alone, "till the brethren, returned from their meditations, began to assemble. Then some would ask him questions on things that puzzled them, some would speak of their meditations, some would ask for an exposition of the Truth. Thus would the first watch of the night pass, as the Blessed One satisfied the desire of each, and then they would take their leave. And part of the rest of the night would he spend in meditation, walking up and down outside his chamber: and part he would rest lying down, calm and self-possessed within. And as the day began to dawn, rising from his couch, he would seat himself, and calling up before his mind the folk in the world, he would consider the aspirations which they, in previous births, had formed, and think over the means by which he could help them to attain thereto."[1]

Into the framework of this noble, simple life, the jewels of the Buddha's teachings were set. In order to appreciate them, we need to remember this environment, to remember that the Buddha was a Hindu speaking to Hindus on matters largely familiar to them, using religious and metaphysical terms in their ordinary accepted meanings, raising no opposition as a heretic —as he assuredly would have done had his teaching been materialistic, as it became later among some non-Hindus, ignorant of the connotation of the terms employed—a Teacher, distinguishable from other teachers of his time by his contemporaries only by the incomparable purity, compassion and wisdom that breathed from his every look, his every word. Dr. Rhys Davids, regarding Buddhism as "diametrically opposed" to Hinduism, regards it as an evidence of wonderful toleration that he was allowed to teach so peacefully. "It is even more than that. Wherever he went, it was precisely the Brahmins themselves who often took the most earnest interest in his speculations, though his rejection of the soul theory and of all that it involved was really incompatible with the whole theology of the Vedas, and therefore with the supremacy of the Brahmins. Many of his chief disciples, many of the most distinguished members of his Order, were Brahmins."[1] It is more reasonable to suppose, and the supposition is borne out by his recorded sayings, that he met with no opposition just because he did *not* reject the soul theory with all that it involves; and when some of his followers committed this terrible blunder, Buddhism became extinct in India, for never will Hindus accept any so-called religion that casts aside belief in the gods and in the immortality of man. As Dr. Rhys Davids says: "We should never forget that Gotama was born and brought up and lived and died a Hindu. His teaching, far-reaching and original as it was, and really subversive of the religion of the day, was Indian throughout. Without the intellectual work of his predecessors his own work, however original, would have been impossible.[2] He was no doubt the greatest of them all; and most probably the world will come to acknowledge him as, in many respects, the most intellectual of the religious teachers of mankind. But Buddhism is essentially an Indian system. The Buddha himself was, throughout his career, a characteristic Indian. And, whatever his position as compared with other teachers in the West, we need here only claim for him, that he was the greatest and wisest and best of the Hindus."[3]

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[1] *Buddhism*, pp. 108-12.

How continually he spake as Hindu to Hindus, his similes and teachings often show, being drawn from the ancient scriptures. Take, as illustrations, the three controls of actions, speech, mind and body,[4] drawn from Manu; the sentence: "he who holds back rising anger like a rolling chariot, him I call a real driver; other people are but holding the reins," and the reference to the senses as well-broken horses, recalling the teaching of Yama in the *Kathopanishad*.[1] The play on the higher and lower self,[2] drawn from the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. "All that we are is the result of what we have thought; it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts,"[3] from the *Chāndogyopanishad*. "It is good to control the mind, which is difficult to hold, unstable, and which goes where it pleases,"[4] a reminiscence of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. But it is useless to multiply instances. Enough that the great teacher carefully re-echoed the ancient writings, not as needing them himself—he who knew all—but lest the ignorant should be caused to stumble, and turn away from the faith of their fathers.

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[1] Op. cit., p. 115.

[2] How then can we be asked to wrench the terms he uses away from all their previous connotations?

[3] Op. cit., pp. 116, 117.

[4] *Dhammapada*, 281.

Let us now turn to the mass of teachings that confronts us, and learn from examples something not only of his precepts, but of his methods. To a remarkable degree they were pointed, they were practical, and addressed to the consciences of his hearers; he never for one moment hesitated to speak in plainest language, in clearest terms, of the faults into which we are betrayed, of the mistakes into which men are constantly falling. For the Buddha was a Teacher indeed, a Teacher whose words illumined the mind. Strong and practical, then, and for the most part it seems as if some passing incident gave the opportunity for a parable or a story bearing an ethical lesson. His Bhikkhus were quarrelling, and as each man quarrelled with his neighbour, his neighbour returned the quarrel, and hatred ruled where peace ought to have been. Then the Buddha called them to him; and he told them a story; the story of a king of Kāshī who made war against the king of Koshala, a small kingdom, and drove him away from his kingdom and took it to himself. The dispossessed king and his wife went and lived in a poor hovel, and there a son was born to them. The barber of the dispossessed king, seeing his former master, and desiring to curry the favour of the conqueror, betrayed to him the fugitive, and the king sent forth and seized the fugitive and his wife and gave them over to the executioner. As they were being led to the place of death, the son, who had been sent away for safety, came and saw his father and mother on their way to execution, and he pressed through the crowd. The father whispered: "My son, be not long, be not short; hatred ceases not by hatred; by non-hatred it ceases"; and he then went on to death; and the son pondered over the father's words, he understood them not. Presently he took service under the king who had slain his mother and father, after reducing them to beggary, and, attracting the king's attention, he was taken as his personal attendant. The king loved the youth, and used to sleep with his head in his lap. As he slept there one day the young prince thought "This king is in my power; he has slain my father and mother; he has reduced me to misery; he is helpless, I will slay him"; and he drew out his sword. But his father's words came to his mind: "be not short", and he knew it meant: "be not hasty in your action"; he put the sword back and remembered the other words, that hatred ceases not by hatred. The king awoke and said he dreamt that the prince he had dispossessed had slain him, and the youth, drawing his sword, revealed himself and told him that his life was at his mercy. The king prayed for his life, and the prince answered him: "Nay, O king, I have forfeited my life by this threat, and thou must give me back my life and thy pardon." So he gave the king his life, that he could have taken, and the king pardoned the offence and gave him also his life, and then the prince told him of his father's dying words: "My father taught me that I must not be long—I must not keep hatred; I must not be short—I must not be hasty in action. That hatred ceases not by hatred at any time, but hatred ceases by love. For if I had slain thee, thy friends would have slain me in return, and my friends would then have slain thy friends, and so hatred would not have ceased; but now we have each given to the other his life, and thus hatred ceased by love." Then the disciples became at one amongst themselves, and peace was restored within the Order. ✓

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[1] Ibid., 222, 94.

[2] Ibid., 380.

[3] Ibid., 1.

[4] *Udānavarga*, 31. 1.

The weeping mother, with dead babe clasped to bosom, is told her child shall be restored to her if she can bring some mustard seed from a house where none has died; the gentle lesson sank more deeply than a hundred sermons.

A man abused him vehemently as he was preaching the great doctrine: "A man who foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my ungrudging love; the more evil comes from him, the more good shall go from me." While a man reproached him, "Buddha was silent, and would not answer him, pitying his mad folly." The man having finished his abuse, Buddha asked him, saying: "Son, when a man forgets the rules of politeness in making a present to another, the custom is to say, keep your present. Son, you have now railed at me; I decline to entertain your abuse, and request you to keep it, a source of misery to yourself. For as sound belongs to the drum, and shadow to the substance, so in the end misery will certainly overtake the evil doer." Buddha said: "A wicked man who reproaches a virtuous one, is like one who looks up and spits at Heaven; the spittle soils not the Heaven, but comes back and defiles his own person. So again, he is like one who flings dirt at another, when the wind is contrary; the dirt does but return on him who threw it. The virtuous man cannot be hurt; the misery that the other would inflict comes back on himself."[1]

Sometimes a gleam of humour flashes out, and it is not difficult to picture the scene between the anxious disciple and the gentle, slightly amused, Master: "How are we to conduct ourselves, Lord, with regard to womankind?" "Don't see them, Ānanda." "But if we should see them, what are we to do?" "Abstain from speech, Ānanda." "But if they should speak to us, Lord, what are we to do?" "Keep wide awake, Ananda."[2] Keep wide awake; notice what you are doing, guard your thoughts. A long sermon as to the wisdom of guarding himself from being led astray would not have been half as effective as that single sentence, "Keep wide awake, Ananda."

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[1] *The Sūtra of the Forty-two Sections*, translated by S. Beal, from the Chinese. *Catena of Buddhist Scriptures*, pp. 193, 194.

[2] *Mahā-parinibbāna-Sutta*, 23. Sac. Bks. of the East, vol. 11.

Among the striking characteristics of his teachings we find the occult fact that evil can only be put an end to by its opposite good: "Let a man overcome anger by love; let him overcome evil by good; let him overcome the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth."[1] A man must be strong and purposeful: "Earnestness is the path of immortality (Nirvāna), thoughtlessness the path of death. Those who are in earnest do not die; those who are thoughtless are as if dead already."[2] Causation is unbroken: "If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage . . . If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him."[3] "He who has done even a little good finds in this world and in the other happiness and great profit; it is like a seed that has well taken root. . . . He who has done what is evil cannot free himself of it; he may have done it long ago or afar off, he may have done it in solitude, but he cannot cast it off, and when it has ripened he cannot cast it off."[4] Above all, desire must be got rid of, as the root of all sorrow: "From desires comes grief, from desires comes fear; he who is free from desires knows neither grief nor fear . . . It is hard for one who is held by the fetters of desire to free himself of them, says the Blessed One. The steadfast, who care not for the happiness of desires, cast them off and do soon depart . . . As the shoe-maker, when he has well prepared his leather, can use it to make shoes, so when one has cast off desires, he has the highest happiness . . . Desires are never satiated; wisdom affords contentment . . . Not even in the pleasures of the gods does the disciple of the perfect Buddha find pleasure; he rejoices only in the destruction of desires.'[1] The teaching is pithily summed up: "Avoid doing all wicked actions; practise most perfect virtue; thoroughly subdue your mind; this is the doctrine of the Buddha."[2]

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[1] *Dhammapada*, 223.
[2] Ibid., 21.
[3] Ibid., 2.
[4] *Udānavarga*, 28. 25, 30.

Most important is the teaching of the Buddha on "the subjugation of all the *Āsavas*," of the outgoings of the life in man towards objects of desire. Of these there are seven classes, to be abandoned respectively: (1) by insight—insight into the four noble truths, destroying the delusion of self, hesitation and dependence on external rites; (2) by subjugation—the ✓ five senses and the mind; (3) by right use—clothes, alms, and abode, to be used, not delighted in; (4) by endurance —cold and heat, hunger and thirst, gad-flies, mosquitoes, wind, sun, snakes, abusive words, bodily suffering, pains; (5) by avoidance—obvious dangers, improper places and companions; (6) by removal—evil thoughts; (7) by cultivation—the higher wisdom. When all this is done, "he has destroyed that craving Thirst, by thorough penetration of mind he has rolled away every Fetter, and he has made an end of Pain."[3]

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[1] Ibid., 2. 2, 6, 12, 14, 18.

[2] Ibid., 28. 1.

[3] *Sabbāsava-Sutta*. Sac. Bks. of the East, vol. 11.

His ethical teaching was pointed and direct to a rare degree; take for instance this: "The fault of others is easily perceived, but that of oneself is difficult to perceive, a man winnows his neighbour's faults like chaff, but his own fault he hides, as a cheat hides the bad die from the gambler. If a man looks after the faults of others, and is always inclined to be offended, his own passions will grow, and he is far from the destruction of passions."[1]

The Buddha was fond of forcing his questioners to answer their own questions. Instead of answering a question, he questioned the questioner. Instead of laying down a doctrine or truth in answer to a question, he gradually led the man stage by stage to answer that question for himself—one of the wisest ways of teaching and the most likely of all ways to make a man realize the truth. Thus, when a young Brāhmana, by name Vāsettha, asked him whether certain learned Brāhmanas showed the right way of reaching union with Brahmā, the Buddha replied by a series of questions, the answers to which showed that the Brāhmanas neither knew Brahmā nor were like him, that while versed in the Vedas they were "omitting the practice of those qualities which really make a man a Brāhmana, and adopting the practice of those qualities which really make men not Brāhmanas," and at this point the Buddha summed up: "that these Brāhmanas, versed in the Vedas and yet bearing anger and malice in their hearts, sinful and uncontrolled, should after death, when the body is dissolved, become united to Brahmā, who is free from anger and malice, sinless, and has selfmastery—such a condition of things has no existence." He then tells the youth that when the Tathāgata was asked the way that leads to the world of Brahmā, he could give the answer: "For Brahmā I know, Vāsettha, and the world of Brahmā, and the path which leadeth unto it. Yea, I know it, even as one who has entered the Brahmā world, and has been born within it." "He, by Himself, thoroughly understands, and sees, as it were, face to face, this universe—the world below with all its spirits, and the world above, of Māra and of Brahmā—and all creatures, Samanas and Brāhmanas, Gods and men, and He then makes His knowledge known to others." When a man is attracted by the truth, and leaves his home, going forth into "the homeless state" and leading a noble and pure life, pervades the whole world "with heart of Love, far-reaching, grown great and beyond measure," such a man is approaching union with Brahmā; and that he "should after death, when the body is dissolved, become united with Brahmā, who is the same—such a condition of things is every way possible".[1]

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[1] *Dhammapada*, 252, 253, Sac. Bks. of the East, vol. 10.

✓ Here we have the key to all his teachings with regard to the Brāhmanas. Over and over again he says that they are to be treated with respect, that they are to be treated with reverence; but over and over again he also says that he does not call that man a Brāhmana who is vicious, who is uncontrolled, who is greedy, who is full of the vices of the world. So also he says as to his own Bhikshus, that he does not call that man a Bhikshu who wears a yellow robe and whose passions are uncontrolled. For the Buddha was not deceived by outward appearance, nor by the mere look of the outer appearance, nor by the mere look of the outer man; he looked at the heart, and only when the heart was clean would he admit that the man had the right to bear a sacred name. He demanded, as every great teacher has demanded, that those who bear a sacred name should honour that name by the life they lead, and not bring scandal and discredit upon it by being full of passion and lust, anger and greed. His testimony to what they had been is full of interest. Asked by some Brāhmanas whether the Brāhmanas of his day were like the ancient Brāhmanas, he replied in the negative, and proceeded: "The old sages were self-restrained, penitent; having abandoned the objects of the five senses, they studied their own welfare. There were no cattle for the Brāhmanas, nor gold, nor corn, (but) the riches and corn of meditation were for them, and they kept watch over the best treasure . . . Inviolable were the Brāhmanas, invisible protected by the Dhamma, no one opposed them (while standing) at the doors of the houses anywhere. For forty-eight years they practised juvenile chastity; the Brāhmanas formerly went in search of science and exemplary conduct. The Brāhmanas did not marry (a woman belonging to) another (caste), nor did they buy a wife." They did not kill cows, "our best friends, in which medicines are produced," but sacrificed the gifts made to them. "They were graceful, large, handsome, renowned, Brāhmanas by nature, zealous for their different works; as long as they lived in the world this race prospered. But there was a change in them." They began to covet wealth, they began to slay cows; "there were formerly three diseases: desire, hunger, and decay, but from the slaying of cattle there came ninety-eight". So things went from bad to worse, till "Dhamma being lost, the Suddas and the Vessikas disagreed, the Khattiyas[1] disagreed in manifold ways, the wife despised her husband. The Kshattriyas and the Brāhmanas and those others who had been protected by their castes, after doing away with their disputes on descent, fell into the power of sensual pleasures."[2]

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[1] *Tevijja Sutta*. Sac. Bks. of the East, vol. 11. Here again we notice how the Buddha endorses the occult teachings as to the existence of the gods, instead of pushing them aside, as the popular view often asserts. Of course, no one with knowledge could take up the modern materialistic idea now fathered on Buddhism.

How lofty was the opinion held by the Buddha of the true Brāhmana may be read in the closing shlokas of the *Dhammapada*, in which, after giving the characteristics of the true Brāhmana he concludes: "Him I call indeed a Brāhmana whose path the Gods do not know, nor spirits (Gandharvas), nor men, when passions are extinct, and who is an Arhat (venerable). Him I call indeed a Brahmana who calls nothing his own, whether it be before, behind, or between, who is poor, and free from the love of the world. Him I call indeed a Brāhmana, the manly, the noble, the hero, the great sage, the conqueror, the impassable, the accomplished, the awakened. Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who knows his former abodes, who sees heaven and hell, has reached the end of birth, is perfect in knowledge, a sage, and whose perfections are all perfect."[3] The Buddha re-affirmed the ancient ideal, the essence of caste consisting in spiritual deve-

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[1] Shūdras, Vaishyas, and Kshattriyas.

[2] *Brahmanadhammikasutta*, in the *Sutta-nipāta*, trans. from the Pāli by V. Fausböll. Sac. Bks. of the East, vol. 10, pt. 2.

[3] *Dhammapada*, 420-23.

lopment, and if he declared that "a man does not become a Brāhmana by his plaited hair, by his family, or by birth,"[1] he only declared what Manu had taught when the caste-system was ordained. Similarly he declared of his own monks: "A man is not a mendicant (Bhikshu) simply because he asks others for alms; he who adopts the whole law is a Bhikshu, not he who only begs. He who is above good and evil, who is chaste, who with knowledge passes through the world, he indeed is called a Bhikshu." "Many men whose shoulders are covered with the yellow gown are ill-conditioned and unrestrained; such evil-doers by their evil deeds go to hell."[2] In the *Udānavarga* the Tibetan recension of the *Dhammapada*, a chapter is devoted to the Brāhmana, and he is described as one who "is righteous, controlled, quiet, restrained, leading a life of holiness, (Brahmacharya), who neither harms nor kills any living thing." He "has reached the perfection (set forth in) the Vedas," he "is on the way to Nirvāna," he "has now a body for the last time," he "is tolerant with the intolerant," he "has crossed the stream."[3]

There is the ideal of the Brāhmana taught by the Buddha. There is the description of what the name should carry with it; and I appeal to the ancient Hindu Scriptures which endorse that contention. I appeal to such books as the *Mahābhārata*, which contain exactly the same line of thought, and to the words of Manu, that the Brāhmana without the qualities of the Brāhmana was like " an elephant of wood and antelope of leather," the mere outward appearance of the thing, and not the reality. It is no more reasonable to speak of the Buddha as antagonistic to the Brāhmanas than to speak of Manu in exactly the same words, for both taught the same truth, that a man must have the inner life before he was worthy of the name. And if it be said, as I hear Hindus say, that he desired to abolish the Brāhmana caste because he thus pointed out the evil lives of Brāhmanas, then we shall have to argue that he wished to abolish his own order of Bhikshus, because he declared that the yellow robe did not make the Bhikshu, but that there must be self-restraint, pure life, and the absence of worldly wealth. To represent the Buddha as an enemy of Brāhmanas and as seeking to destroy them as a caste, when all that he did was to hold up the ancient ideal and to reproach those whose lives dishonoured it, is a perversion of facts. Had he succeeded in purifying the caste, he would thus have restored it to its ancient splendour; but he failed, alas! and its own poor ideals are hurrying it towards a self-chosen extinction. The occultist can but hold up the immortal ideal, and if men, rejecting it, perish, they perish.

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[1] Ibid., 393.

[2] Ibid., 266, 267, 307.

[3] Op. cit., 33. Trübner's Oriental Series, trans. from the Tibetan by W. W. Rockhill.

Touching the gods, the Buddha did not take the position often ascribed to him, a position impossible to One who knew all worlds. He says that he himself has visited all the worlds of the Gods, and therefore that he knows the way to them and is able to guide men along the path. And on one occasion when he was asked the way to the world of Brahmā, He answered by asking the man whether he did not know the way to his own village, and whether he could not direct thither the wayfarer. The man answered that he was born there, and knew the way that led to it; so also, replied the Buddha, did he know the world of Brahmā having visited it and being familiar with it.[1]

We find frequent references to the gods, endorsing the beliefs of the Hindus he addressed: "By earnestness did Maghavan[2] rise to the lordship of the Gods." "The disciple will overcome the earth, and the world of Yama, and the world of the Gods." "The gods even envy him whose senses, like horses well broken in by the driver, have been subdued." (Note the simile taken from the *Kathopanishad*). "Le tus live happily then, though we call nothing our own. We shall be like the bright Gods, feeding on happiness." "Speak the truth, do not yield to anger, give if thou art asked for little; by these three steps thou wilt go near the Gods."[3] In the Southern Church the belief in the Gods seems to have disappeared, but man's ineradicable need to worship re-appears in the adoration paid to the Buddha himself. In the northern Church, less injured by materialism, the worship of the gods survives, and they are worshipped under their Hindu names. There also we find the Trimūrti re-appearing under Buddhist names: Shiva represented by Amitābha, the Boundless Light, Vishnu by Padmapāni, otherwise Avalokiteshvara; the Third being Manjushri, "the representative of creative wisdom, corresponding to Brahmā."[4]

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[1] See *ante*, the answer to Vāsettha.

[2] Indra.

[3] *Dhammapada*, 30, 43, 24, 197, 224.

[4] Sanskrit-Chinese Dictionary, Eitel, *sub voce*.

Closely allied to the conception of the great hierarchies of gods, are the ideas of "heaven" and "hell," regions of the world invisible through which man passes when out of the physical body—Devachan and part of Kāma Loka, the Theosophist calls them. The Buddha by no means ignored these states; in fact, we find him describing both at length; many hells are mentioned in some detail by him in the *Mahāvagga*, in connection with the *post mortem* fate of one of his Bhikshus; again in the *Mahā-parinibbāna-sutta*, he declares of the wrong-doer: "on the dissolution of the body, after death, he is reborn into some unhappy state of suffering or woe," while the well-doer, under similar conditions, "is reborn into some happy state in heaven."[1] The northern Church scriptures have very full accounts of the invisible worlds: there is the Kāma Loka, consisting of the earth and the four lower heavens, the abodes of Devas, Asuras, demons, beasts and men (the physical and astral planes); then comes the abode of Māra (astral) and the eighteen heavens of the Rūpa Loka (Rūpa Devachan or Svarga); and beyond these the Arūpa Loka of four heavens, "an ecstatic state of real existence; here dwell those disciples of Buddha who have not attained the imperishable nature." Beyond this is Nirvāna.[2] In regard to this, as with regard to some other of the more occult truths, the scriptures of the northern Church seem to be fuller than those of the southern; the traditions of the Arhats, to whom the Buddha gave in His old age the secret teachings, were carried into Tibet and China when the Buddhists fled away from India, and were there faithfully preserved.

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[1] Op. cit., 1. 28, 42.

[2] *Catena of Buddhist Scriptures*. Summarized from Chinese Scriptures, pp. 89-91.

His view of the so-called miraculous powers is recorded in the *Surangama Sūtra*,[1] where the Buddha is recorded to have said that by practising Samādhi without any reliance on Bodhi—i.e. seeking the Siddhis rather than Jñāna [2]—men attained the power of flying through space, of invisibility, etc., and attained various degrees of sublime knowledge but not reaching wisdom, they were still bound to the wheel of transmigration.

Much controversy has arisen over the apparent denial, by the southern Church, of a continuing Ego, passing from life to life. Such Orientalists as Dr. Rhys Davids insist on it, and much of the popular Hindu distrust of Buddhists arises from the general belief that they do not believe in the Ego. The teachings of the Buddha himself, however, are clear enough. Thus —when asked about some of his disciples who had died, "where has he been reborn and what is his destiny?" —He answered that one had reached emancipation; another "has become a Sakadāgāmin, who on his first return to this world will make an end of sorrow;" another was "no longer liable to be reborn in a state of suffering;" in all these cases, a persisting individuality is obviously taken for granted. A disciple may say of himself: "Hell is destroyed for me; and rebirth as an animal, or a ghost, or in any place of woe. I am converted; I am no longer liable to be reborn in a state of suffering, and am assured of final salvation."[3] So also he said that those who died while "they with believing heart, are journeying on such pilgrimage, shall be reborn, after death, when the body is dissolved, in the happy realms of heaven."[1] The doctrine of the Self from the Vinaya has already been quoted. And we find him saying, like any other Hindu: "For Self is the lord of self; Self is the refuge of self"[2] a sentence meaningless if there be no Self.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 30-31.

[2] Seeking powers rather than wisdom.

[3] *Mahā-parinibbāna-suttā*, 2. 6-10.

In fact the whole teaching loses its reasonableness and falls into ruins, if the fundamental teaching be withdrawn of an Ego that passes from birth to birth in the cycle of reincarnation, and emerges in the Self when emancipation is gained. This is the Hindu teaching, and the Buddha built his teachings on its universal acceptance among his hearers. In the northern Church the doctrine remained unchallenged of the "true man without a position"; the Lin-tsi School teaches: "Within the body which admits sensations, acquires knowledge, thinks and acts, (compare the statement regarding the Self in the Vinaya) there is the 'true man without a position,' Wu-weichenjen. He makes himself clearly visible; not the thinnest separating film hides him. Why do you not recognize him? The invisible power of the mind permeates every part . . . This is Buddha, the Buddha with you."[3]

Next should be considered his teaching of "the path," which depends entirely upon the continuity of life. The Path, in Buddhism, has the same stages as those given by Shri Shamkarācārya, both as to the preliminary path and the path itself. The Buddha asks from his disciples, as the first qualification, that opening of the mind which is identical with discrimination, or *viveka*, discrimination between the permanent and the impermanent; the second step is that regarding action, which teaches indifference to the fruits of action, and is identical with *vairāgya*; then follow the six qualities of the mind, the same six recounted in speaking of the same path as taught in Hinduism; fourthly, the deep longing for liberation, the same as *mumukshā*; and lastly, the *gotrabhu*, the same as the *adhikāri*, when the man is ready for Initiation. After Initiation comes the path itself, traced in the following quotation, which begins at the highest stage and follows it backward. "Buddha said: The Rahat (Arhat) is able to fly through the air, change his appearance, fix the years of his life, shake heaven and earth. The successive stages towards this condition of being are: The Anāgāmin, who, at the expiration of his life (years) ascends in a spiritual form to the nineteen heavens, and in one of these completes his destiny, by becoming a Rahat. Next, is the condition of a Sakridāgāmin, in which, after one birth and death, a man becomes a Rahat. Next, the condition of a Srotāpanna, in which, after seven births and deaths, a man becomes a Rahat. These are they who, having entirely separated themselves from all desire and lust, are like branches of a tree, cut off and dead."[1]

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[1] Ibid., V. 22 The pilgrimage is to any one of the four places at which the Buddha was respectively born, reached illumination, founded the kingdom of truth, and died.

[2] *Dhammapada*, 380.

[3] *Chinese Buddhism*, pp. 163, 464.

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[1] *Sūtra of the Forty-two Sections. Chinese Buddhism*, 191.

Thus the Buddha taught his disciples, as the scriptures still record, and we have the right to use these scriptures against the misconceptions of those who, materialized in their own thought, are impatient of the verities of the world invisible.

Arhatship was the last step before attaining complete liberation, and gaining the Nirvānic consciousness. The teaching of the Buddha as to Nirvāna is, perhaps, the clearest on record, being positive instead of, as is usual, negative. Having said that the Bhikshu should concentrate within himself all his mental faculties, "as the tortoise draws its body into its shell," the Lord proceeds to tell of Nirvāna: "Bhikshus, the uncreated, the invisible, the unmade, the elementary, the unproduced, exist (as well as) the created, the visible, the made, the conceivable, the compound, the produced; and there is an uninterrupted connection between the two. Bhikshus, if the uncreated, the invisible, the unmade, the elementary, the unproduced, was nonentity, I could not say that the result of their connection from cause to effect with the created, the visible, the made, the compound, the conceivable, was final emancipation. . . The impermanency of the created, the visible, the made, the produced, the compound, the great torment of subjection to old age, death, and ignorance, what proceeds from the cause of eating; (all this) is destroyed, and there is found no delight in it; this is the essential feature of final emancipation. Then there will be no doubts and scruples; all sources of suffering will be stopped, and one will have the happiness of the peace of the Saṃskāra. . . This is the chief (beatitude) of those who have reached the end, perfect and unsurpassable peace, the destruction of all characteristics, the perfection of perfect purity, the annihilation of death."[1] Such is his description of a state in which he ever dwelt, whether in or out of the body; yet we find people who instead of believing in the annihilation of death, believe in the annihilation of life in Nirvāna. I know no scripture in which the truth as to Nirvāna is put as plainly as it is here. It is existence, and not non-existence; it is reality, and not non-reality; it is permanency, and not transitoriness. What is meant by "Nirvāna," by the "going out" implied in the name, is, he declares, the going out of all these impermanent things; these disappear, and then man attains his final emancipation.

For forty-five years did the Lord Buddha wander over Northern India, teaching, until his work was done and he came to the laying aside of his body. A strange story is attached to his outgoing, significant enough in the old days, but read in a literal sense in these modern days, by those who eat pigs. Chunda, a worker in metals, shortly after the Buddha had announced his approaching departure, offered him his daily meal and prepared dried boar's flesh, sweet rice and cakes. The Lord bade Chunda serve him only with the boar's flesh, giving the rice and cakes to the disciples, and bade him bury what of the boar's flesh remained; for "I see no one, Chunda, on earth, nor in Māra's heaven, nor in Brahmā's heaven, no one among Samanas and Brāhmanas, among Gods and men, by whom, when he has eaten it, that food can be assimilated, save by the

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[1] *Udānavarga*, 26. 1, 21, 22, 24, 31.

Tathāgata."[1] Surely such words are enough to show that the "boar's flesh" was not physical food, such as men who live on flesh assimilate without difficulty. After eating, he taught, and then sickness fell on him and great pain; he bore it calmly, and recovering, went on his way. That same day his skin was observed to shine with exceeding splendour, and he told Ānanda that it was the sign of his departing that night, and lying down, he rested for awhile, and arising, went to the Sāla grove of the Mallas and lay between the twin Sāla trees, with his head to the north; the trees showered on him their flowers, and heavenly flowers fell, and heavenly music sounded, in homage to the dying Lord, but he spake to Ānanda and said that while such homage was due to him, yet worthier was the homage paid by the pure and noble man or woman who obeyed his law. All the Devas of the worlds gathered, and crowds of men came to pay their last homage, and the Buddha made his last Arhat, the mendicant Sabhadda; five hundred disciples stood round him at the ending, and he spake his last words: "Behold now, brethren, I exhort you, saying: Decay is inherent in all component things. Work out your salvation with diligence." Then silence fell, and he passed into deepest meditation, and returned not.

As a king of kings, his body was prepared for the burning, and was laid on a pyre of all fragrant woods; it left no ash, but the bones remained. These were divided as sacred relics, and carried away in eight portions, each to be placed under a Thūpa, and a ninth Thūpa was erected over the vessel in which his body had been burned, and a tenth, by the Moriyas, over the embers of his funeral pile. So ended the noblest life yet lived by one of our humanity, the first who on this globe has attained Buddhahood. "Bow down with clasped hands! Hard, hard is a Buddha to meet with, through hundreds of ages!"[1]

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[1] *Mahā-parinibbāna-sutta*, 19.

There is no time to trace the later growth of Buddhism, the development of its different schools of philosophy, the arising of noble teachers trained in its wisdom, the materializing of the faith that followed its introduction among less developed and less metaphysically inclined people, and its maintenance in its original purity in its esoteric schools. Enough has been said of the saying of the Buddha himself to substantiate my position as to the identity of the teachings and the training in Hinduism and Buddhism, and to justify my plea for love and amity between the two faiths that belong to the Hindu people, and are the glory of the Hindu race. This teaching of the Buddha, of the Mighty, of the Enlightened One, who, first of all in our humanity climbed the ladder of Buddhahood, is the ancient teaching reproclaimed. There are hatred and division too often between Hinduism and Buddhism; there are suspicion and doubt and antagonism, which have made a great gulf between the two mighty religions, and men will not try to bridge it either on the one side or on the other. Yet the Teachers of both belong to the same Brotherhood; the disciples of both are going towards the same Brotherhood; there is no difference there between the Hindu

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[1] The closing words of the *Mahā-parinibbāna-sutta*, from which the above account of departure is summarized, any passages in inverted commas being textual quotations.

Master and the Buddhist Master, for both teach the same essential verities, and have come along the path common to both religions. Born on Indian soil, speaking with Indian lips, reproducing the noblest moralities of the Hindu Scriptures, recognizing the Hindu Gods, the Buddha is still rejected by the Indian people as a Teacher, though inconsistently worshipped as an Avatāra by many of the orthodox Hindus.

Why should there be enmity instead of brotherhood, why should there be suspicion and hatred instead of peace? This mighty religion that moulds so many million minds, this noble philosophy that trains so many million intellects, this life—the most perfect in its details of which there is any record amongst the histories of men, evolved in our land—why should you exclude them from your sympathy, why withold from them your reverence and your love? The Buddha comes to you, a man of your own country, the glory of the Hindu people, born in the Kshattriya caste, belonging to the Aryan people, teaching the ancient truths in a new form, and making them ready for the training of vaster multitudes. He is ours, as he is also the world's greatest among its teachers, purest and fairest of all the blossoms of humanity, this flower flowered on the Indian soil, this teacher spake the Indian tongue, and loved the Indian people. He taught them, he worked for them, he healed them, instructed them; and then his compassion flowed outwards, overflowed the worlds. Then surely we may reverence him, the Blessed One, the Lord, the Teacher. He is admitted to be Teacher among the Gods; he may well also be done homage to as Teacher among men.

Hinduism and Buddhism would do well if—mother and daughter—they rushed together again in a motherly and filial embrace, and forgot in that embrace the history of their estrangement, forgot in that embrace the history of their long separation. Then would the Indian home again be at one, one roof-tree covering mother and daughter alike, thus able to influence the western world with one lip and with one tongue, helping forward the redemption of that humanity of which the Buddha was born, and for which he lived. Let all re-echo the words which close the account of his departure: "Bow down with clasped hands! Hard, hard is a Buddha to meet with through hundreds of ages!"

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CHRISTIANITY

A CONVENTION LECTURE

CHRISTIANITY

In dealing with the subject of Christianity, there are certain special difficulties which we did not have to face in speaking of other great religions with which we have been dealing. These special difficulties arise from certain distinct causes. First, there is a certain historical obscurity affecting its origin, due to the struggles through which it passed in its early days, in a time when records were not carefully kept, and when an enormous mass of spurious documents under sacred names were put forward, at first blindly accepted and then gradually sifted out. The obscurity would not matter, as it can be quickly dissipated by the light of occult knowledge; but if this be done, many present-day Christians would feel bitterly aggrieved, as though the essentials of their faith were being attacked.

Our next great difficulty is the immense difference—or rather the immense differences—that separate the Christians amongst themselves, so that whatever line one may take, one is likely to have some of the Christians saying that Christianity has been misrepresented, inasmuch as it has not been taken along their special line. For we have the Greek Church and the Roman Catholic Church, embracing a vast majority of the Christian population; then we have a very large number of different churches and sects classed together under the title of "Protestants"—an awkward name to deal with, because it affirms nothing, but simply declares its protest against opinions held by other Christians. Hence in these three divisions, as I will call them for the moment, we find a great number of serious contradictions, and the student who desires to give a fair exposition and in no sense to misrepresent, finds himself in a whirlpool of conflicting statements, the acceptation of any one of which brings him into conflict with others. There is nothing, outside the Bible and the Apostles' Creed, that by the whole of the Christian world would be taken as a fair representation of Christian doctrine, and disputes as to the meaning of these abound. The extraordinary importance attached by all sections of the Christian world to the form of intellectual belief causes a bitterness of controversy unknown to other creeds, accuracy of belief being a far more strigent condition of membership in most of the churches than submission to any rule of conduct.

I propose to do here as I have done in dealing with the other religions—take the scriptures, the accepted scriptures, of the whole religion and base my exposition upon them; I shall further use the documents of the early Church, the teachings of the "Fathers of the Church," as they are called, as elucidating the scriptures; and then, using the light of occultism, I shall try to disentangle what is essential from the non-essential, to disentangle that which is real and true from the accretions which have grown over it by lack of knowledge, and very often by the exigencies of controversies. One other great difficulty remains, and this is one which deals with the emotions rather than with the intellect. Christianity alone among the religions of the world claims to be unique; every other religion claims authority over its own adherents, and stands as it were on its own ground, admitting the value of other religions and holding towards them, as a rule, a position of benevolent neutrality, not of active opposition. But with regard to Christianity, this is not the case. Christianity claims to be the one revelation, the unique voice of God to a man. It permits no rivals on its platform; it admits no brothers into its household; it claims to stand by itself, alone, unapproachable, classing together all the other religions of the world as mistaken, sometimes under the contemptuous name of Heathen, sometimes rather more courteously but still in the same exclusive spirit.

This, of course, stirs up angry feelings both on the one side and the other. The Christian propagandist insists on the supreme value of his own faith, and the small value of others; while on the other hand the members of other faiths, resenting the assumption of superiority, feel moved to an opposition towards Christianity which they do not feel as regards the non-missionary faiths of the world. Especially in a country like India, those who do not belong to the Christian religion see what I cannot but call its worst side, its side of antagonism, very often accompanied, unfortunately, by insult and outrage as regards the elder religions; so that it is very difficult to gain your sympathetic understanding of what the religion really is in itself, for you have seen it under the most unfavourable aspect, on its militant rather than on its really religious side. I shall then have to ask you to look on this religion as you more easily look upon others, as a way in which the Supreme is training a large number of His human family, as a religion that brings help and comfort and spiritual teaching to millions of the human race. If it suffers, as it often does, by the unwisdom of its militant representatives, try to forget that, and to look at the religion as a religion, and not as a proselytizing agency.

Let us, with this preface look at the authorities, and see what we have to deal with in the study of the religion, how far we can understand the environment in which it gradually grew up, for without a study of that environment, you will never understand the later presentation of the doctrines, you will never be able to realize the fashion in which it grew.

First of all, we have certain "canonical books," accepted equally by all divisions of Christendom, as to which there arises no challenge at all from Greek, Roman Catholic, or Protestant Churches. They all alike accept, without questioning, certain books, which are classed together under the names of the Old and New Testaments, together forming the Bible, as books which contain the divine revelation, anything contrary to which is regarded as heretical. The Old Testament, the more ancient division of these canonical Scriptures, consists of a large number of different books, many of them historical, received from the Jewish, or the Hebrew, nation. Their writing extended over a long period of time, and the succession of books is marked by a very distinct growth from a comparatively barbarous condition—wherein the religion was narrow, filled with sacrifices of a peculiarly bloodthirsty character—down to the later times when the Hebrew people, having largely come into touch with other civilizations, especially with those dominated by the religion of Zoroaster, took into their own faith a nobler, a grander conception of the divine Being,

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which you find expounded in the prophetic books; these contain some most noble passages as regards the nature of God, and also as regards the righteousness which God demands from men. I shall refer presently to these more in detail, but will first finish the question of authorities.

In the Old Testament we have further the Psalms, which are songs somewhat of the nature of the songs that we find in other religions, like those that are in the Vedas, like the Gāthās of the Zoroastrians; some of them marked by the most elevated and noble spirit, some of them belonging to the earlier stage, exceedingly militant in their character and by no means always very good or high in their morality. We then come to the documents included under the title New Testament. This consists of four Gospels, containing the life of the Founder of the religion, an account of the early Church, a number of epistles written by his followers to the different sections of the infant Church, and a book of prophecies. There is comparatively little doctrine in the gospels themselves; certain doctrines may be deduced from them, but there is little authoritative statement; rather do you find a large number of ethical precepts, a large number of the teachings of the Christ, more of an ethical than of a philosophical character; then in the epistles are contained most of the dogmatic statements giving the outline of the doctrines of the faith.

Outside this canon, selected from a mass of documents so far as the New Testament is concerned, we have what are called apocryphal scriptures. The apocryphal scriptures of the Jews are distinctly remarkable works, one of them especially, the *Book of Wisdom*, being a document of rare beauty and showing great spirituality. These are more thoroughly accepted by the Roman Catholics than they are by the Protestant Churches. In the Roman Catholic Bibles, they are generally bound between the Old and New Testaments, whereas in the majority of Protestant Bibles, they are dropped out as non-canonical. Next we have a mass of apocrypha in connection with the early Church, the gospels of Mary, of Peter, of James and so on—stories of the Infancy of Jesus, stories of His later life, stories of his descent into hell, of His work in the invisible world—a mass of writings, very many of them exceedingly interesting, as showing the literature of primitive Christianity, interesting and instructive for the student, and necessary to be studied, if he would know what I may call the intellectual environment of the early Church. These are never bound up with the book called the Bible; they form a great mass of literature, a very large number of documents, which a student ought to read, if he desires to understand early Christianity at all.

Lastly, we have an immense literature, that of the fathers, of the bishops, of the teachers, of the early Church, running especially over the latter part of the second, through the third, fourth, and fifth centuries —once more a mass of voluminous literature, without a knowledge of which no one is competent to pass an opinion upon Christian doctrine, nor to stand up as a teacher or an exponent of Christianity. This literature was written by most learned men, men of whom many have been sainted by the later Church, like St. Clement of Alexandria, St. Irenaeus, and many others. These are documents of enormous value in understanding the growth of Christianity, and it is very largely due to the utter carelessness of the Protestant churches regarding them, and the dense ignorance of their contents which as a rule you find among the less instructed Protestant clergy, that Christianity is often presented in so crude, so narrow, and so unphilosophical an aspect, that many of the educated reject it because it seems to them to be irrational. You have in these documents the philosophic, the metaphysical, basis of Christianity. Yet, where do you find many learned Protestant clergy thoroughly conversant with these documents? You get that peculiar class who echo the statement that the "Bible, and the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants". The result of this is a most unphilosophical form of Christianity.

With regard to the oral traditions—for they are largely oral traditions that you find in the four Gospels that contain the life of the Founder—these were selected rather late in the second century, and were put together under the names of four of the great apostles of the church. That they were selected from many other documents is clear from the preamble to the third Gospel, in which the writer begins by saying: "For as much as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed amongst us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order," and so he also writes his gospel. Now that is an important point, as showing you the way in which these accounts were written. First, from mouth to mouth the story spread. In Christianity, as in other religions, there was an immense mass of oral tradition handed from mouth to mouth and uncommitted to writing.

Many of the sacred teachings were never written down at all, as we shall find from the testimony of some of the fathers of the Church; the creed which every Christian was taught to recite was not written but was only taught by word of mouth, to be used as a sign of recognition of a certain status in the Church. That period of oral teaching is of considerable importance, and its existence is further proved by the quotations of the sayings of Jesus given by the earliest fathers, by men like Justin Martyr, Ignatius, the Shepherd of Hermas, and others, who quote as the sayings of the Lord sentences which are not to be found in the canonical gospels at all, but which are found in the so-called apocrypha. The canonical are selections from a larger tradition, put together at a later date. We shall have to glance at Clement of Alexandria, one of the greatest fathers of the Church, at Tertullian, at Origen, who have left voluminous writings, helping us to see in detail the condition of the Church in their times; and these we shall rely upon to establish certain fundamental positions, without which you will do injustice to Christianity, as so many of its own adherents do it injustice today.

First amongst these preliminary positions comes the division of Christian teaching into two parts—the revealed and the unrevealed, the exoteric and the esoteric doctrines. This division existed among the Hebrews, who so much influenced the earlier tradition of Christianity, and who had the secret system known under the name of the Kabalah. I am not going to speak upon it now, although that also should be known by the earnest student of Christianity. But I want to draw your attention to certain statements of the Christ to his apostles, and of the earlier teachers, which prove beyond the possibility of challenge, the existence of hidden or esoteric teaching, the loss of which in some parts of the Church explains very largely the crude statements that we now hear made as to God and as to the human soul.

First of all let us take one or two statements of the Christ himself as regards the fashion of his own teaching. There comes in the forefront of it his declaration to His apostles: "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables."[1] Origen commented on this declaration of the Christ as follows: "I have not yet spoken of the observance of all that is written in the Gospels, each one of which contains much doctrine difficult to be understood, not merely by the multitude, but even by certain of the more intelligent, including a very profound explanation of the parables which Jesus delivered to 'those without,' while reserving the exhibition of their full meaning for those who had passed beyond the stage of exoteric teaching, and who came to him privately in the house. And when he comes to understand it, he will admire the reason why some are said to be 'without' and others 'in the house.'"[2] Thus Origen draws a distinction between those that are without, the unlettered, the unlearned, multitude, who could only be taught the elements of truth by way of parables, and those who were within the house, apostles and disciples, to whom the word of God was revealed in its entirety, the mysteries of the kingdom which were not given at all to the outer world.

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[1] Mark, 4. 11.

[2] *Contra Celsum*, 21. Not having the Fathers at hand, I have availed myself for the quotations from them of Mr. A. M. Glass'

Then again we find Jesus saying to his disciples words that admit of no misconception: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet."[1] The meaning of the word "dogs" is known to us, not only from its use by Jewish historians, but from the lips of Jesus himself. The word was used to describe every nation that was not of the seed of Abraham. And we find that when a Syro-Phoenician woman came to Jesus and asked him to exercise his miraculous power, his first answer was: "It is not meant to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." She meekly accepted the title and replied: "Yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."[2] So that the meaning of the word "dog" is by no means in dispute; it means those who are not within the limits of the kingdom of God. So the early fathers understood the meaning and obeyed it. They used exactly the same policy. Clement of Alexandria, quoting these very words, says that it is difficult to teach "swinish and untrained hearers."[3]

excellent series of articles in *Lucifer*, on "Christianity and its Teachings".

[1] Matthew, 7. 6.

[2] Matthew, 15. 26, 27.

[3] Stromata, 1. 12.

So again Jesus says to his disciples: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."[1] According to the traditions of the fathers, he remained on earth after his resurrection for eleven years, teaching his apostles the secret things. St. Clement says of this sacred knowledge: "It was spoken from the beginning to those only who understood. Now that the Saviour has taught the Apostles the unwritten rendering of the written (scriptures) has been handed down also to us."[2] According to the *Acts* he only remained for forty days, but during these forty days he instructed them as to the things of the kingdom of God,[3] and those instructions remained unrecorded. There is no trace of them in the canonical scriptures of the Church. In fact, Origen observes on this very fact, that Jesus "conversed with his disciples in private, and especially in their secret retreats, concerning the gospel of God; but the words which he uttered have not been preserved."[4]

Just in the same way do we find Saint Paul speaking. He tells his converts of the Church of Corinth: "I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ."[5] Again: "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom,"[6] and "we speak wisdom amongst them that are perfect:"[1] not amongst the generality but amongst the perfect, a name which is well recognized in its technical meaning—from the statements in the fathers —those who have been initiated into the mysteries and are therefore the perfected within the Church. I might quote other texts, but these may suffice, and we will turn to the practice of the Church, as shown in the fathers.

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[1] John, 16. 12.
[2] Stromata, 6. 15.
[3] Acts, 1. 3.
[4] *Contra Celsum*, 6. 6.
[5] I Corinthians, 3. 1.
[6] Ibid., 2. 7.

Clement of Alexandria states that in his writings he only intended to recall to his readers truth they had received more fully in oral exposition: "The writing of these memoranda of mine, I well know, is weak, when compared with that spirit, full of grace, which I was privileged to hear. But it will be an image to recall the archetype to him who was struck with the Thyrsus,"[2] a phrase every occultist will understand. "It is not to be wished," he writes, "that all things should be exposed indiscriminately to all and sundry, or the benefits of wisdom communicated to those who have not, even in a dream, been purified in soul (for it is not allowed to hand to every chance-comer what has been procured with such laborious efforts); nor are the mysteries of the Word to be expounded to the profane."[3]

When Celsus assailed Christianity as a secret system, Origen answered: "To speak of the Christian doctrine as a *secret* system is altogether absurd. But that there should be certain doctrines not made known to the multitude, which are (revealed) after the exoteric ones have been taught, is not a peculiarity of Christianity alone, but also of philosophic systems, in which certain truths are exoteric and others esoteric."[1] In order to preserve due order, Christian converts were led successively through different stages; at first they were hearers, then catechumens, and then, receiving baptism, they became full members of the church.

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[1] I Corinthians, 2. 6.

[2] Stromata, 1. 1.

[3] Ibid., 6. 9.

Within the church itself were also grades: first came the general members; out of these, the pure in life went on into a second grade "whoever is pure, not only from all defilement, but from what are regarded as lesser transgressions, let him be boldly initiated in the mysteries of Jesus, which properly are made known only to the holy and the pure. . . . He who acts as initiator, according to the precepts of Jesus, will say to those who have been purified in heart: 'He whose soul has, for a long time, been conscious of no evil, and especially since he yielded himself to the healing of the word, let such a one hear the doctrines which were spoken in private by Jesus to His genuine disciples.'"[2] These were the "few chosen" out of the many who were "called," and beyond these were still "the chosen of the chosen," with "perfect knowledge," and who "lived in perfection of righteousness according to the gospel."[3] Tertullian complains of the heretics that they did not preserve this order, but treated everyone equally: "To begin with it is doubtful who is a catechumen and who a believer; they have all access alike, they hear alike, they pray alike—even heathens, if any such happen to come among them. 'That which is holy they will cast to the dogs, and their pearls, although' (to be sure) they are not real ones, 'they will fling to the swine'."[1]

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[1] *Contra Celsum*, 1. 7.
[2] Ibid., 3. 60.
[3] Stromata.

Part of this teaching, at least, concerned the true meaning of the scriptures, which were by no means accepted as mere historical and ethical documents as they are today. Origen explains—and his statements are especially valuable, since he is stated to have been an "expositor of the mystical tradition of the Church"[2]—that scripture is threefold in meaning: the "flesh" for simple men; the "soul" for the more instructed; the "spirit" for the "perfect," and he quotes the already mentioned words of St. Paul as to the "wisdom of God in a mystery". The histories are the "flesh," and are very useful to the simple and ignorant, but often absurdities are introduced in order to show that there is a hidden meaning, and the gospels "do not contain throughout a pure history of events, which are interwoven, indeed, according to the letter, but which did not actually occur". "The gospels themselves are filled with the same kind of narratives: e.g. the devil leading Jesus up into a high mountain, . . . and the attentive reader may notice in the gospels innumerable other passages like these, so that he will be convinced that in the histories that are literally recorded, circumstances that did not occur are inserted."[3] Some hints are given by various fathers as to their methods of scriptural interpretation, and it is evident that a very complete system existed, one of the keys, at least, being numerical. But we have not time to follow this attractive bye-way.

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[1] *De Præretione Hæreticorum*, 41.

[2] *Ecclesiastical History*, 3. 5.

[3] *De Principiis*, 4. 1.

Enough for our purpose to show that Christianity, like other great religions, had its secret teaching, confined to the few. This was lost, for the most part, in the flood of ignorance which swept over Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire, and the crude interpretation, the teaching for the multitude, replaced the spiritual truths known to the few. A few fragments survived, in the custody of the Greek and Latin Churches, and symbols and ceremonies still tell of their original presence, but as a systematic teaching they disappeared, leaving Christianity shorn of its strength. In this way Christianity has become weakened, in this way scepticism has largely developed, and we find men throwing aside the whole of Christianity, because the presentment made to them is utterly unworthy of intellectual apprehension, and because it contradicts the plainest facts of science.

Let us now hastily trace the religious evolution of the Hebrew nation, in order that we may understand the place in it of the Founder of Christianity, the conception of God current in his time, and also the changes through which that conception had passed. In the earliest books of the Hebrew Scriptures we have a very limited conception of God, and however true they may be as regards the lower gods, comparatively narrow in their individuality, and limited in their power as all the lower gods must necessarily be, some of the ideas are utterly revolting when they are applied to the Supreme Deity, and are given as descriptions of the one God, the Supreme LOGOS, He who presides over the universe, the

Life and Supporter of all. I need only remind you, in passing, of many statements, such as the way in which this limited representative of the divine came down to walk in the garden of Eden, came down to upset the builders of the tower of Babel, and so on, for you to realize at once that you are face to face with the lower divine entities and not with the LOGOS. But let us pass on from those, with all the bloody sacrifices that surrounded them, and take the nobler conceptions of the prophets, which moulded the later views adopted in the Christian Church. Here you find an idea of God which is lofty and pure in character. He is essentially holy, the Holy One of Israel; He is "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy";[1] He is "God the Lord, He that created the heavens, and stretched them out; He that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; He that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein,"[2] He is the one, the only God; "Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and besides me there is no saviour."[3] In connection with this nobler view of God, we can see many traces of the influence upon the Hebrew captives of the Zoroastrian belief.

Their ideas before and after the captivity are entirely different. There is also a demand for righteousness, for purity, a contempt for outward observances when they were not connected with inner nobility of character, a contempt which is sometimes even fierce in its expression, as though there were over-mastering indignation at the idea that any would dare to offer to a holy God the mere outer ceremonies, instead of a righteous and noble life. Take for instance that very strong passage that you find in the prophet Amos: "I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of the viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."[1] That is the spirit of the later prophets.

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[1] Isaiah, 57. 15.
[2] Ibid., 42. 5.
[3] Ibid., 43. 10, 11.

You may take another example from Isaiah, where the people are complaining that though they fast, God has not listened to them, that they have afflicted their bodies and their souls and He takes no notice; and then the answer comes thundering as from Sinai: "Ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen: to loose the hands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward."[1] There is the moral side coming out, as it comes out over and over again in these prophets.

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[1] Amos, 5. 21-24.

Only one other quotation will I give you, to show the mental environment, as it were, in which Jesus was born, and that is a word from the prophet Micah, which sums up human duty. The prophet asks himself how he shall please God and what he shall do: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"[2] That is the strong and sound morality that you find coming out in these later Jewish teachers, and it was in a nation that to some extent, at least, was influenced by that teaching that Jesus was born.

Now in looking for a few moments at that figure which has fascinated so many hearts, round which the love and adoration of generation after generation of the western world have twined, let us try to realize the work that he had to do, the mission he was intended to fulfil. A new civilization was to be born, a new departure in the life of the world; young nations, full of vigour, of energy with the metaphysical intellect less developed than the more practical side of the mind, were coming to the front, and were gradually to assume the reins of the destinies of the world. A strong and vigorous people, full of vitality, full of strength, full of practical ability, this was the type from which the nations of Europe were to be born, whose religious training was the problem before the great Brotherhood, the guardians of the spiritual evolution of man. For that training another proclamation of the old truth was wanted; for the training and moulding of that new-dawning civilization, again the old truths must be spoken by a messenger of that mighty Brotherhood. This also must be trained as others had been trained, and with a training suitable to its characteristics. Hence you find in Christianity comparatively little declaration by the Christ of subtle metaphysic, much of ethic, much noble morality, much spiritual teaching of a practical kind, little—in fact next to nothing—of the science of the soul. That was reserved for the esoteric teaching, confined to his immediate disciples.

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[1] Isaiah, 58. 4-8.

[2] Micah, 6. 6-8.

Looking, as it were, over the district in which this religion was to begin, for a fit instrument and messenger of the Brotherhood, they chose one—a young man already marked out by a marvellous purity and by a profound devotion, Jesus, known later as the Christ. His mission began at that point of his life described in the gospels as his baptism, when he was about the age of thirty. At that period, as you may read in the gospels, the Spirit of God came down upon him, and he was proclaimed by a voice from heaven as the Son of God, to whom people were to listen.[1] On that phrase "Son of God", I shall speak in a moment, when we come to deal with the challenge of the Jews to his claim to that position. It is enough for us to recognize that, according to the view put forward in the story of his life, his ministry began when he was thirty years of age, when this special manifestation took place. From the occult standpoint, that is the allegorical way in which the choosing of this young man to be the messenger of the divine teaching is described, and represents the giving to him of the illumination which made him fit to be a divine Teacher of men.

For three years only he led a teacher's life, a life beautiful in its purity, radiant with love, with compassion, with all the tenderest qualities of the human heart. We see him wandering over the land of Palestine, raising the dead (as they were called) healing the sick, opening the eyes of the blind: miracles, men call these healings. But there is in them nothing surprising to the occultist, for he is familiar with such actions, he knows the powers by which they are done. For never yet has a great Teacher come to earth, one in whom the power of the Spirit was developed, who was not a master over physical nature, nature being subject to him, and obedient to his will. These so-called miracles are nothing but the use of certain hidden powers of nature to bring about certain external results; these miracles of healing, of restoring the sight of the blind, and so on, were worked both long before the Christ was born, and have been repeated by many, years upon years afterwards, and so lightly did the Christ himself hold them that when he spoke of them to his disciples He said: "Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go unto my Father."[1] He left it as the mark of the men who had real faith, living faith, in him, that they should be able to take up serpents, and to drink poison without injury[2]—as a mark belonging to all Initiates who choose to exercise the power, and the absence of which, at least in some sections of the Church, shows that they have lost that living faith of which their own Master laid down these powers as the outward symbol and expression.

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[1] Matthew, 3. 16, 17.

The life of Jesus, as I said, is a beautiful life. Listen to his teachings, and there you will get his spirit, so different alas! from the spirit which is often shown by those who bear his name. These teachings are exactly at one with the precepts of the great spiritual Teachers who preceded him. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."[3] There is the occult truth which he again proclaimed, that only by purity can the Pure be seen, only by the purified can God be known. See how he enforces the teaching, that thought is more important than action, that thought when it is performed is action practically done. "Whoseover," he said, "looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."[4]

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[1] John, 14. 12.

[2] Mark, 16. 17, 18.

[3] Matthew, 5. 8.

[4] Ibid., 28.

Take again that teaching so familiar in the teaching of Manu, Zoroaster and the Buddha: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."[1] See the occult statement, which probably few but occultists will understand: "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness."[2]

Listen to his proclamation once more of that ancient, narrow path—the path that Hindus know as sharp as the edge of the razor: "Straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."[3]

Hear his words to the multitude, breathing out that divine compassion, which is the very birthmark of everyone who comes from the great Brotherhood, from the great White Lodge: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."[4]

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[1] Matthew, 5. 44, 45.
[2] Ibid., 6. 22, 23.
[3] Ibid., 7. 14.
[4] Ibid., 11. 28-30.

See him checking the disciples, as they tried to push away the mothers who brought their children to him that he might bless them: "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."[1] And once he took a little child and set him in the midst as example to his disciples of humility and submission.

Take this sterner teaching, exactly again on the line of the ancient occult teaching, which says that attachment to the things of the earth is fatal to progress in the life of the spirit. When a young man goes to him and asks how eternal life may be won, his first answer is the exoteric answer: "Keep the commandments." The answer of the young man is: "All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?" Then comes the sterner demand: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me." The young man "went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions." And then the occult Teacher enforces the teachings on His disciples: "A rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. . . . It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."[2]

In this way then he taught the same ancient morality, the teaching so familiar to us all, the teaching of the ancient Founders of all religions. We trace another likeness to his predecessors in the teaching by parables; always a parable was on his lips when he was speaking:

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[1] Matthew, 19. 14.

[2] Ibid., 10. 16-24.

to the multitude. Parable after parable he spake, each one containing some gem of spiritual truth. Perhaps the one that has most held the heart of Christendom, and to which men's hearts have ever since answered because of its beauty and its tenderness, is that of the lost sheep, lost in the wilderness, for which the shepherd goes out and searches diligently till he finds it "and when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."[1] The "Good Shepherd" is one of the favourite names of the Christ throughout Christendom, and you may see him in pictures, you may see him in the painted windows of churches and cathedrals, drawn as the "Good shepherd," with the lost lamb on his shoulder, which he has found and is bringing home rejoicing to the fold where the other sheep are kept. His doctrine of the "Kingdom of God," has been much perverted but was well understood in the early Church; it was a kingdom into which men were invited, and in which the stages were clearly marked. Men must be pure ere they were
clearly marked. Men must be pure ere they were
allowed to enter; they must have faith; that is a necessity, before they can come into it; they must add to their faith knowledge, otherwise they cannot reach its higher grades; wisdom must follow knowledge, otherwise they remain imperfects; to all such immortality was promised

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[1] Luke, 25. 3-7.

—the conquest over death, the going out no more; for as we shall see presently, the Christian religion in the early days taught the ancient doctrine of reincarnation; hence there came a time when death was overcome and men went out no more from the Temple of God, when they had become perfect, masters of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Thus in teaching, in healing, in helping all who were in need, Jesus passed three brief years. He "went about doing good," is the summary of his life given by St. Peter.[1] Very short was his life, and why?

Because of the people to whom he came to bring the message of the Brotherhood: going to such a people, fierce, fanatical, harsh and bigoted in their own religion, there could be but one result—the putting into action of their stern law of blasphemy, his slaying by hatred and by malice. Sometimes men ask today: Why do the Masters remain hidden, why do they stay behind the veil and refuse to show themselves in the haunts of men? Because until men re-learn the ancient veneration, which made the messenger of the Gods a sacred person, and surrounded him with love, with reverence, with worship, the Masters of the Wisdom come not forth to stimulate the angry passions of men by jealousy of their purity, by hatred of their spiritual lives; the Christ was the last of these great messengers sent to the world, and they to whom he came slew him when three years of public life were over; they hated him for a purity that seemed to them as an insult offered to their own impurity, and for a greatness that was a reproach to their littleness.

[1] Acts, 10. 38.

We now come to the struggles of the early Church. The gospel of love and of compassion spread swiftly amongst the poor, more slowly amongst the highly educated, by means of esoteric teaching; and we see a great effort made by the Brotherhood during the first three centuries after the Christ. There was a struggle between learning and ignorance, a struggle between knowledge and superstition. It raged strongly and fiercely, having for its chief centre Alexandria, for its combatants the Gnostics on one side, the mass of Christians on the other. As you trace the story you find great Gnostic teachers, endeavouring to introduce the wisdom of the East under new names into this latest religion, intended for its modern vessel. The great Valentinus wrote his apocalypse of wisdom, the *Pistis Sophia*, the greatest treasure of ancient Christian occultism, now made known to the English-speaking world by the translation of G. R. S. Mead, the Secretary of the European Section of our Theosophical Society. Mead writes in his Introduction: "Let us then consider the movement about the year A.D. 150. By that time the original Logia or the Urevangelium of Christianity had disappeared, and the Synoptic Gospels were all set in the framework of the traditional life of the great Master of the Faith. The popular tidal wave of the new religion had come exclusively from the ocean of Jewish tradition, and was engulfing a more universal view of Christianity in the same flood of intolerance and exclusiveness which had characterized the Hebrew nation throughout the whole of its previous history. This startling phenomenon was now attracting the attention of minds which were not only skilled in the philosophy of the schools, but also imbued with the eclectic spirit of a universal theosophy and a knowledge of the inner doctrines of the ancient religions. Such men thought that they saw in the Christian Gospel a similarity of doctrine and a universalism which was consanguineous with these inner teachings of the ancient faiths, and set to work to endeavour to check the exclusive and narrowing tendencies which they saw so rapidly developing among the less instructed, who made faith superior to knowledge, even to such an extent as to openly condemn every other form of religion and scoff at all philosophy and education."[1]

The struggle raged between these men and the masses, led indeed by some wise and deeply instructed men, and it ended in the success of the unlearned multitude and in the casting out of the Church of the more learned and more philosophical Gnostics, who have ever since remained under the ban of heresy. The Church emerged from this struggle with enough of true religion left for training and elevating the heart, but not enough for justifying to the intellect the wisdom of the ages. It brought out of the struggle its devotion to the personal Christ, the man-God who was the object of its most passionate and most fervent worship. In that revelation of the Divine, there was, as I say, everything that was wanted for the heart; alas! there was not enough for the subjugation of the intellect, for the training of the philosophic mind. The result was that the Dark Ages came down upon Europe, the Dark Ages as they are rightly and fitly called in history, and the esoteric knowledge of the early Church disappeared; the fathers even were well nigh forgotten, save in the monasteries, where they still were studied, and hence now and then the Roman Catholic Church gave doctors and metaphysicians to the world.

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[1] *Pistis Sophia*, p. 23.

We can see how, during this time of darkness, doctrines were twisted and distorted, and how some of them became revolting alike to reason and to conscience in the form in which they were presented. We come down to the time of the Protestant Reformation, when the terrible views of Calvin and the slightly more liberal views of Luther dominated the reforming party, and from them was evolved modern Protestantism, in its least crude form in the Church of England, ever largely influenced by Roman Catholic doctrines. Now, within the bosom of this Church itself, a nobler school is growing up, more liberal in its thinking, more charitable in its views of others, and we may hope that this will redeem later Christianity, and give it its rightful place amongst the religions of the world.

We must pass from this to the doctrines of Christianity and glance at them as fully as our time admits. The Trinity—of that there is curiously little said in the Bible; in the Old Testament there is nothing at all, although the Jews had the doctrine in their secret teaching, the Kabalah; in the New Testament there is little said of it, and the most precise statement is challenged—or rather, is omitted—by some revisers of the Bible. This statement is very definite: "There are three that bear record in Heaven—the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost: and these three are One."[1] The revisers regarded this as a monkish gloss that had crept into the book later in the history of the Christian Church, and omitted it. That is the only text on which the doctrine can absolutely rely. There is a phrase at the end of the Gospel of St. Matthew as to baptism "in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," but that also has been challenged by criticism, though not rejected by the revisers. There was in the early Church a struggle over the doctrine, which is complicated by the deification of Jesus into the Second Person, but ultimately it emerged from the struggle in a form recognizable as the ancient doctrine: the Father, existence, the source of all life; the Son begotten by, emanated from, him, dual in his nature, God and man—with that mark of duality which is always the mark of the second Logos, or the second Person in the Trinity—by whom the worlds were made, and without whom nothing can be made in the manifested universe; more indefinitely the Third Person—the Holy Spirit, the Universal Mind, or Wisdom. As I say, there was a struggle in the Church. Some contested the doctrine of the Trinity; others maintained it; and finally the ancient doctrine emerged triumphantly from the struggle and became the orthodox doctrine of the Church. It was then authoritatively declared in the "Athanasian Creed," and, despite some of its clauses which are objectionable, that creed gives one of the best expositions of the metaphysic of the doctrine which is extant in Christianity. I recall it because there is dimly and vaguely suggested in it something behind the Trinity, also hinted at here and there in the course of the Christian scriptures. The Divine Substance is said to be one. Believers are warned that as they must not confound the Persons of the Trinity, so neither must they divide the Substance, the unity which underlies the Three, the unity of which the Three are only the manifestations. A Roman Catholic theologian points out that the word Person comes from *persona*, a "mask"; and this must imply that behind the mask there is the unrevealed Reality, the hidden God, who is not known. There is a suggestion of this Unknown in the verse in Job: "Canst thou by searching find out God?"[1] More than once in the book of Job this question is suggested of the Unknowable, the unrevealed God, unrevealed in His nature and in His essence.

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[1] John, 5. 7, old version.

Then coming downwards from the Trinity we have the seven Spirits before the throne of God.[2] These are the seven great Gods of the Elements, familiar in Hinduism so far as five of them are concerned—the five Gods of the five manifested elements; here the whole seven are mentioned. Then we have, as lower Gods, all the Archangels and Angels, those of whom St. Paul speaks as angels, principalities and powers;[3] of these there are nine orders: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominations, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels. Very interesting in this connection is the statement of St. Ignatius, a bishop of the Apostolic Church, that he was not yet "able to understand heavenly things; as the places of the angels, and the several companies of them, under their respective princes."[4] In the Roman Catholic Church there is, quite rightly, the worship of Angels, the worship, that is, of the lower gods, who have to do immediately with man and with all the Manifestations of Nature.

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[1] Job, 11. 7.

[2] Revelation, 4. 5.

[3] Romans, 8. 38.

[4] Trallians, 5.

Coming next to the important question of man's nature and of his relation to God, let us take it as taught in the Scriptures themselves, unhappily not always found in the teachings of the modern Church. St. Paul describes man as triple in his nature—spirit, soul and body,[1] a distinction being made between spirit and soul that has dropped out of popular teaching altogether, wherein the spirit and soul are identified and so the whole of the evolution of man is confused: The spirit is divine; "Know ye not," said St. Paul, "that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you."[2] Exactly the same form of words is here used as in Hindu literature, where we find the human body spoken of as Vishnupura, Brahmapura—the town or city of Brahma or of Vishnu. Here St. Paul, himself an Initiate, speaks of the human body as God's temple, of the spirit of God as dwelling within it. And then—this is the passage that I had in my mind when I said I would allude to the Sonship of the Christ which was proclaimed at his baptism—I find the Jews assailing Jesus because he claimed to be the Son of God; his defence is a remarkable one; he does not say, as a modern Christian might say for him: "Yes, I am the Son of God, as no other man can be"; on the contrary he founds his claim to divine Sonship on the divinity which is inherent in the nature of man himself. Listen to his words, and see how clear, how definite they are. He refers the Jews to their own scriptures. "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? if he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?"[1] There is the Christ's own defence of his Sonship: "All men are gods, according to the scriptures, and the scriptures cannot be broken; therefore there is no blasphemy in my claim, when I call myself also the Son of God."

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[1] 1 Thessalonians, 5. 23.

[2] 1 Corinthians, 3. 16.

Then take that beautiful prayer just before he goes to his crucifixion. He is praying to his Father about the future of his Church. He speaks to God of their unity, that he is one with him, and he goes on to pray that "they all may be one; as thou, father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. . . . I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."[2] There is the declaration of the unity of man with God. There is the proclamation in this religion also of man's divine nature, and of his re-union with the Father from whom for the time he seems to be separated, when dwelling in the body of flesh.

If we take further the teaching as we find it in the writings of St. Paul this becomes clearer and clearer as we go on; for we find him using the term "Christ," as a mystic name for the principle of soul developing in man, the son of the father (spirit): "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you."[3]

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[1] John, 10. 34-6.
[2] Ibid., 17. 21, 23.
[3] Galatians, 4. 19.

The Christ is not only to be a man external to his followers. He is to be formed as the babe within the womb in the heart of every one of his disciples. And this Christ who is to be born in the disciple is to grow, is to develop within him, until at last the man has attained unto "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ".[1] They are to become manifested gods, they are to become gods manifest in the flesh. That is the teaching of apostolic Christianity, so sadly mutilated in its presentation by modern writers. And it is taught that all things are to be finally merged in God. Do you suppose that the teaching of union with, of merging in, Brahman is a teaching which Christianity had not? Then turn to the 15th chapter of the Epistle to the Corinthians and the description that is given there: "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father. . . . The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. . . . When all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all".[2] Just the old teaching coming out again, "God all in all," as the last stage of the universe, the Son, the Christ, gathering up all into Himself as Īshvara, and merging into Brahman, when God is all in all.

Let us next turn to reincarnation; that very verse just quoted that the "last enemy that shall be destroyed is death," in itself gives a hint as to the teaching of the early Church, for death is said not to be destroyed till "the end". So also is a hint in the words: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out,"[1] the going out being the going to rebirth, the exile from the heavenly places. But there are three cases which mark the doctrine more strongly so far as the Christ is concerned. It must be remembered that belief in reincarnation was current among the Jews of his time, so that naturally references to it would be intelligible to all those about him. But this fact is not enough to show that he accepted the doctrine. So take his words when some disciples came from John the Baptist and asked him if he were the Christ. When the messengers had received his answer for their master, Jesus spoke of the character of the great preacher, and declared: "If ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come"[2]—a very clear statement that the Jewish prophet had reincarnated in John the Baptist. Again, when his disciples asked why it was said that Elijah would come before the Messiah, his answer was: "Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not. . . . Then the disciples understood that he spake to them of John the Baptist."[3]

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[1] Ephesians, 4. 13.

[2] 1 Corinthians, 15. 24-8.

Again, his disciples asked him about a blind man: "Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" Now a modern Christian would answer: "How could a man have committed sin before he was born, so as to bring upon himself this penalty?" But Jesus made no such ignorant reply. His reply was:

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[1] Revelation, 3. 12.

[2] Matthew, 11. 14.

[3] Matthew, 17. 10-13.

"Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."[1] He accepted the pre-existence of the soul and the possibility of sin committed before the present birth, but gave another reason for the blindness.

Turning to the fathers, we find that Tertullian speaks very plainly in his *Apology*. "If a Christian promises the return of a man from a man, and the very actual Gaius from Gaius, the cry of the people will be to have him stoned; they will not even so much as grant him a hearing. If there is any ground for the moving to and fro of human souls into different bodies (of animals), why may they not return into the very substance they have left, setting forth what is greatlier worthy of belief, that a man will come back from a man, any given person from any given person, still retaining his humanity; as that the soul, with its qualities unchanged, may be restored to the same condition though not to the same frame-work. . . . You ask, shall we be always dying and rising up from death? If so the Lord of all things had appointed, you would have to submit. . . . (But the millennium comes as limit and) after this there is neither death nor repeated resurrections."

Origen held the belief in the pre-existence of the soul and of its being born into a body consonant with its previous deeds. He says: "Is it not more in conformity with reason that every soul, for certain mysterious reasons (I speak now according to the opinions of Pythagoras and Plato, and Empedocles, whom Celsus frequently names) is introduced into a body, and introduced according to its deserts and former actions?"[1] Many passages might be quoted, all showing a belief in the pre-existence of the soul and of its "descent" to take birth here; and there is no doubt that this belief was very widely spread in the early Church, for at a general Council it was formally condemned and stamped as a heresy—a Council held after darkness had begun its reign. This decision, more than anything else, divorced Christianity from the other religions of the world, and led to the most disastrous consequences. For with the doctrine of Reincarnation went the doctrine of karma, the two depending one upon the other, and when reincarnation is no longer believed, karma can no longer be taught. It was taught in the early epistles with no lack of plainness: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."[2] But when reincarnation went, these words became unintelligible, and then all sorts of schemes had to be invented, schemes of vicarious atonement and what not, in order that men might not reap the result of their own doings. But when any such scheme is put to you by a Christian, who tells you that by that way you can escape the consequences of your actions, answer him in the words of his own scriptures: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

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[1] John, 9. 2, 3.

A noble doctrine, the doctrine of the law of sacrifice, underlies the idea of the vicarious atonement, but it has been travestied in a way which leads to the most terrible blasphemy. The law of sacrifice which brings about the union of man with God, the law of sacrifice by which the worlds were made, and by which the worlds are living, that noble doctrine of antiquity is shown forth in primitive Christianity by the perfect sacrifice of the Christ to the will of God. But it comes out in mediaeval Christianity in schemes which put the Son and the Father in opposition, as it were, the one to the other, and which shock all reverence as well as outrage all reason, by bringing in all kinds of legal quibbles into the relationship between the Spirit of God and man.

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[1] *Contra Celsum*, 1.

[2] Galatians, 6. 7.

With the loss of reincarnation comes into existence another doctrine, in which Christianity is unique—the doctrine of an eternal hell. Heaven and hell, equally eternal, became the outcome of one short life here. A man born into the world with his character already marked upon him, with vicious or virtuous tendencies, as the case might be, brought with him from the womb and stamped upon him in the cradle, that man, by living twenty, forty, sixty, one hundred years, was to fix the whole of his eternal destiny and go either to heaven or hell for evermore. How terribly that doctrine worked in demoralizing the minds of men, in making them selfish, I will only quote one verse to show—a verse written by one of the gentlest, noblest, purest men of modern Christianity, John Keble, the author of *The Christian Year*. He had been so demoralized by this doctrine of an eternal hell, by the idea that heaven and hell must stand or fall together, that in *The Christian Year* he gave voice to a sentiment which seems to me shocking in its selfishness and immorality; he pleaded for the doctrine of eternal torture because without it the idea of the eternal heaven would lose one of its supports.

If some men are not tortured for ever, there is no proof that others will have eternal place in heaven. He says —I quote from memory, but give the gist correctly:

> "But where is then the stay of contrite hearts?
> Of old they leant on Thine eternal word;
> But with the sinner's fear their hope departs,
> Fast linked as Thy great name to Thee, O Lord,
> That we should endless be, for joy or woe:
> But if the treasures of Thy wrath could waste,
> Thy lovers must their promised heaven forego."

But if it were true that life in heaven depended on the tortures of others in hell, I ask you whether any man, with the Christ-spirit in him, would not accept annihilation for himself rather than buy his immortality by the misery of uncounted millions in a hell that knows no ending? Happily, this is a doctrine almost of the past; Christian after Christian is giving it up; teacher after teacher is proclaiming the opposite; Canon Farrar, preaching in the pulpit of Westminster Abbey, proclaimed the doctrine of "eternal hope" as against the doctrine of eternal hell, and only narrow and uncultured minds, who by the lack of the imaginative faculty are not able to realize the horrors of hell, only these continue to teach it and to make it part of Christianity.

I must go swiftly over the question whether the science of the soul is taught in Christianity. In the Roman Catholic Church it is taught to a great extent, but not in the Protestant. I cannot tell you about the Greek Church, for I have no first-hand acquaintance with it; so that I must confine myself to the statement that in the Roman Catholic Church occultism has been to some extent preserved, and there some occult knowledge and some occult powers are still to be found. For instance, in the monastic orders methods of meditation are taught with careful particularity; among the monks and nuns of the contemplative orders there is a system of meditation that carries on the soul from step to step, from the first effort of imagination to the passing of the consciousness into the scene which is depicted; here is a remnant of the science of the soul, based upon a knowledge of facts. There are other occult traces in the Roman Catholic Church; the use of images, or idols, as Protestants call them, the use of holy water, of an ancient language—in which prayers were made by men of knowledge, the utility of prayer largely depending upon the sound which is produced. In these things are shown traces of the old teaching, based on the understanding of the invisible world. Then there is the use of relics and of prayers for the dead—all signs of occult knowledge, however fragmentary, however incomplete. And with what result? That they have produced mystics, saints, workers of "miracles," to an extent which the other sections of the Church cannot approach, and that you find among Roman Catholic mystics who speak of union with God, and of the methods by which that union may be brought about, on lines corresponding to the Hindu. Here again I cannot quote much, for the subject is long; but I may remind you of the exquisite *Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas à Kempis, one of the most wonderful books ever produced by a Christian, a book that men of every faith might read with advantage. St. Thomas à Kempis gives instructions as to what a man must do if he would find Christ, and often the teaching is put into the mouth of Christ Himself. Take the teaching on the Self: "If man would find God he must learn," having left all things else, that "he leave also himself, and wholly go out of himself, and retain nothing of self-love."[1] A man ought "perfectly to forsake himself;"[2] "Son, leave thyself, and thou shalt find Me. . . . Lord, how often shall I resign myself, and in what things shall I leave myself?—Always and at all times, as in little, so also in great; I make no exception, but will have thee to be found in all things divested of thyself. Otherwise how canst thou be mine, and I thine, unless thou be both within and without freed from all self-will? . . . Aim only at this, pray for this, desire this, that thou mayest be divested of all self-seeking; and thus naked, follow thy naked Jesus."[3] "A man's true progress consists in denying himself; and the man that has renounced himself is very much at liberty and very safe."[4] A Vedāntin might have written: "Whatsoever is not God is *nothing*, and ought to be accounted as *nothing*."[5] A man is not to be swayed by emotions, for great delight in devotion does not prove progress, but rather is it seen "in offering thyself with thy whole heart to the will of God . . . so that with the same equal countenance thou continue giving thanks, both in prosperity and adversity, weighing all things in an equal balance."[6] A pithy wisdom is

[1] Op, cit., 2. 11.
[2] Ibid., 3. 31.
[3] Ibid., 37.
[4] Ibid., 39.
[5] Ibid., 31.
[6] Ibid., 26.

found, also, that reminds one of the directness of the Buddha: "Where shall we find a man that is willing to serve God *gratis*?"[1] "What a man cannot mend in himself and others, he must bear with patience . . . endeavour to be patient in supporting the defects and infirmites of others, of what kind so ever; because thou also hast many things which others must bear withal. If thou canst not make thyself such a one as thou wouldst, how canst thou expect to have another according to thy liking?"[2] I might mention many others.

My appeal to Christians, as to men of other religions, would be an appeal for unity, for the breaking down of divisions; why should they not come on a common platform with all the rest of the great religions of the world? Why should not this young religion, with only nineteen centuries of life behind it, come and join with Buddhism with its two thousand five hundred years of existence; with Zoroastrianism and with Hinduism, with their ten thousands and twenty thousands of years rolling backward into the past? Can they not see how they blaspheme God, when they declare that He has kept Himself for only one religion amongst all religions, and that well nigh the youngest of them all? Can they not see how they outrage the Supreme, when they claim a unique platform, pushing all the rest of His children out into the darkness, unrecognized by the Father of all spirits? Is not God called the Father of all spirits, and not only of the spirits incarnated in Christian bodies? If this unity could be gained, all proselytism would cease; no man would try to convert another to his faith, but would rather try to learn what that other may have to teach him, what other views of God. For we can all learn from each other, Hindu from Christian, and Christian from Hindu; Zoroastrian from Buddhist, and Buddhist from Zoroastrian. Every religion is but one coloured ray of the light of God, and in the union of all the religions the true white light is seen. As long as we separate ourselves we are coloured by a particular ray. Let us study all religions, and love them all, and we shall then come nearer to the Fount in which we all have our origin and our ending.

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[1] Ibid., 2. 11.

[2] Ibid., 1. 16.

I belong not to the religion that I here have been depicting; though born in it; I was driven out of it by a narrow presentation, and knew not these truer and deeper views of that faith. But I say to you, that all these religions come from one source. Their children should live as brothers and not as enemies, and none should try to convert others, all should be treated with respect. Hatred is of evil, in whatever religion it may be found. Let each man teach his own faith to those who desire to embrace it; let every man be free to speak of his views of God to all who are willing to listen to him. We are but facets of the Eternal; our poor intellects are narrow channels, through which the life and love of God pour forth. Let us be channels in our own persons, but let us not deny that others are channels as much as we are, and that the divine life and love flow through them as well as through us. Then shall come peace, wherein division shall arise not; then shall come unity, the harmony which is greater than identity. When His children live in love, then they may hope to know something of the love of God, for truly spake a Christian teacher: "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"[1]

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[1] John, 4. 20.

[illegible] something in the love of God, for [illegible] a Christian teacher? 'He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?'

ISLAM

A CONVENTION LECTURE

ISLAM

Among the factors that go to the building of a nation, religion is the one which is the most important, which is the foundation as well as the crown of the national life. It is indeed at first sight an advantage to a nation, where there is but one faith, but one worship, where the child at every mother's knee learns to lisp the same prayer, to think along the same line of religious faith; but still greater it seems to me would be the triumph of religion, if among a people where faiths are many and where the one God of all is worshipped under different names and by different forms, if such a people could form themselves into a single nation, and find in the many faiths a deeper unity, and in the variations of religions the identity of true religion. If such there could be, as there never yet has been in the world's long history, then it seems to me, indeed, religion would have achieved its noblest triumph, and in the many-chorded harmony of various faiths blended into one melodious whole, the Divine Wisdom would have gained its mightiest triumph, and the brotherhood of man its grandest and noblest exemplar. Such possibility lies before India, and before India alone among the nations of the world. Other nations have their faiths, but in India most of the world's faiths are planted, and therefore here, and here alone, can they find their unity and mighty consummation.

So far we have considered five great faiths—Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Jainism, Buddhism and Christianity. That leaves two faiths still that have found their home on Indian soil, the faith of Islam, the Sikh faith —the two remaining that make up the seven faiths of India. At the present time some of these divide Indian from Indian and heart from heart; now they separate men of one faith from men of another, and those who worship but the ONE divide each other in His name. O my brothers, if it may be that on this land that the Gods have blessed we shall make religious unity; if it may be that here one nation shall be builded of many faiths; if the Musalman can love the Hindu and the Hindu love the Musalman; if the Christian can clasp hands with the Pārsi and the Pārsi with the Christian; if the Jaina and the Buddhist and the Sikh can love each other as brethren and not hate each other as rivals; then shall be the triumph of religion, and then alone shall the name of God become a name of peace.

* * * *

There are four things to study in a religion:

Its Founder—whose life and character will be impressed on it.

The exoteric religion, for the masses of the people.

The philosophy, necessary for the learned and the cultured.

The mysticism, expressing the universal yearning of the human Spirit for union with its source.

Let us thus study Islam.

Now come with me to Syria and Arabia. When the sixth century of the Christian Era had broken over the world, come with me, and see what is the state of Arabia the fair, of Syria, the land trodden by the Christ. Religious war on every side that breaks up homes and separates the people; quarrels brutal and bloody; blood-feuds that last from generation to generation; hatreds that divide man from man and clan from clan, and tribe from tribe. Look at Arabia, Arabia where there is a fierce and cruel idolatry that even offers up human beings in sacrifice to idols, and where the worshippers feast on the bodies of the dead; where lust has taken the place of human love, and utter licentiousness the place of family life; where bitter and bloody wars break out on the slightest provocation; where kinsman slays kinsman and neighbour neighbour, and life is almost too foul for words.

Into that seething hell of human passion, murder, lust and cruelty a child is born. He "opens his innocent eyes on the light" on the 29th August, A.D. 570, in Mecca, born of the Quraish clan. A few weeks before his birth his father had died—his father who in the full bloom of his manhood had been given up by his own father as a human sacrifice, and whose life was saved as it were by a miracle by the mouth of the temple priestess, who bade that the youth should be spared. The widowed mother, widowed but a few weeks, gives birth to the child, and then, when a few brief years are over, follows her husband to the grave. In his grandfather's house he grows up, a quiet, silent child, loving, gentle, patient, beloved by all. A few years more, and the grandfather dies. An uncle, Abū Tālib, noblest among his kinsmen, takes him orphaned, doubly, trebly orphaned, to his home, and there he grows up to youthful manhood. Then he goes travelling, in trade, in commerce, through Syria, and watching with grave deep eyes the scenes that go on around him. Four and twenty years have passed over his head, and he has been travelling in Syria for a kinswoman, far older than himself, Khadīja; when he returns, she has found him so faithful, so frugal, so pure, so trustworthy, that she marries him, and they become man and wife—Muhammad not yet the Prophet, Khadīja not yet the first disciple; young man and older woman are they, but they live in a marriage so happy that it remains one of the ideal marriages of the world, until she leaves him a widower at fifty years of age, after six and twenty years of blessed married life.

After the marriage come fifteen years of thought, of quiet outer life, of terrible inward struggle. As he walks through the streets of Mecca the children run out and cling around his knees. He has ever a tender word for the child, a caress for the little one; he is never known to break his word; his kindly counsel is ever at the service of the poor and the distressed. Al-Amīn, they call him, "the trustworthy"; that is the name his neighbours give him, the man worthy to be trusted, noblest name a man can win. But while the outer life is thus useful, gentle and helpful, what is the inner life? Ah! who may tell the storms of anguish and of agony that drive the future Prophet into the neighbouring desert, to wrestle with his own soul in the struggle that only the God-inspired men can know. Far into the desert he flies, month after month, throughout these fifteen years; in the desert cave in solitude he lies, in meditation, in prayer, in bitter self-doubt and self-questioning, in wondering what is the message that he hears: "In the name of thy Lord, cry." Who is he that he should cry? What is he to cry? Rent with doubt and anguish, with self-despair of his own power, he, illiterate, untrained, how shall he trust the inner voice that calls him? Is it not his own pride, his own self-conceit, his own longing for dominion that call him, and not the voice of the Supreme, that bids His Prophets speak forth His word? Thus fifteen years pass, years of struggle that few can measure, and then on one night of nights as he lies there on the ground in his agony, a light shines around him from Heaven, and a glorious form stands before him: "Rise, thou art the Prophet of God; go forth and cry in the name of thy Lord." "What shall I cry?" "Cry," the Angel says; and then he teaches him of the building of the worlds, and the making of man, teaches him of the unity of God, and of the mystery of the Angels, teaches him of the work that lies before him. He the most solitary of men, with a nation around him, he is to go forth and cry, and cry in the name of his Lord.

Forth he goes, and home he rushes, on the ground at home he falls, and Khadija is there. "What shall I do?" he says to her; "Who am I? What am I?" "Nay," says the quiet voice of the faithful wife, "thou art true and faithful, thy word is never broken, men know thy character; God does not deceive the faithful; follow the voice then, obey the call." And the voice of the wife, the first disciple, gives the touch of courage to the human heart that fails before the greatness of the mission, and he stands up, now no longer simply Muhammad, but the Prophet of Arabia, the man who will turn Arabia into a settled state, a mighty power, and whose followers will carry the torch of science and relight it in Europe where it had died, and found mighty empires, and who will be moved by a devotion to the Founder second to that felt in no other faith. For this you should ever remember, you who are not of the faith of the Prophet of Arabia, that among all the many creeds of men there is none that is more earnestly believed, more passionately followed, than that spoken by the mouth of the Arabian Prophet, and if the proof of belief, as Bain says, be in conduct, then watch his followers and see how his word rules still the actions of their lives. Never is a Musalman ashamed to kneel for prayer, though scoffers may be around him, and those who hate his Prophet. See how faith in him has overcome all fear of death. Where do you find heroism greater than that of the African dervishes, who charged over the space swept by the Gatling guns, and died, row upon row, before they could even reach their enemy, going to death as other men go to their bridal, for the love of the Prophet and the faith of Islam?

Such a faith must have a future in the world. Such a faith should stand higher than it stands today.

To come back to our Prophet with only one disciple, his wife. His next disciples are his nearest relatives. That says something for the man. It is easy to gain disciples in a crowd, a crowd who do not know you, a crowd who see you only on the platform, a crowd who hear you only in the set speech, or in answering spoken questions. But to be a Prophet to the wife, and to the daughter, and to the son-in-law, and to the close relatives —ah that is to be a Prophet indeed, a triumph that not even the Christ himself was able to win. These were his first disciples. Abū Tālib, his life-long protector, however, would not accept as Prophet the man who as a baby boy had clung to his knees: "Son of my brother," he answered, "I cannot abjure the religion of my fathers; but by the Supreme God, whilst I am alive none shall dare to injure thee." Then turning towards Ali, his son, the venerable patriarch inquired what religion was his. "O Father," answered Ali, "I believe in God and His Prophet, and go with him." "Well, my son," said Abū Tālib, "he will not call thee to aught save what is good, wherefore thou art free to cleave unto him."[1] For three quiet years he labours, and at the end of the three years, thirty disciples call him the Prophet of the Lord. Then comes his first public sermon, preaching of the unity of God, preaching against human sacrifice, preaching against lust, and drunkenness, and foulness of life. Then some more gather round him, touched by the fire which is breathed from his inspired lips. But with the gathering of others round him, fierce persecution breaks out, and tortures horrible, unbearable almost by human flesh and blood. They tear his followers in pieces; they thrust them through with stakes; they put them on the burning sand with faces upturned to the Arabian sun, and with heavy rocks upon their chests; they bid them deny God and His Prophet; and the disciples die murmuring: "There is but one God and Muhammad is His prophet." See! there is one man; they are cutting his flesh, bit by bit from off his body, and as they cut it off, they laugh and they say: " Would not you rather that Muhammad were in your place, and you at home? " " As God is my witness," answers the dying man, " I would not be at home with wife and children and substance, if Muhammad were for that to be pricked by a single thorn." Such love he inspired in those who died for him.

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[1] Syed Ameer Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, pp. 87, 88.

At last, his followers begin to fly and seek refuge under other rule, and listen for a moment, and hear how those whom he had redeemed from evil speak of this Prophet and of what he had done for them, for the testimony of the disciple is the best testimony to the teacher, and it is there that you will learn best how this man had touched the hearts of his followers. " O king," says the spokesman of the embassy that had fled for protection, " O king, we were plunged in the depths of ignorance and barbarism; . . . we adored idols, we lived in unchastity; we ate dead bodies, and we spoke abominations; we disregarded every feeling of humanity, and the duties of hospitality and neighbourhood; we knew no law but that of the strong; when God raised among us a man, of whose birth, truthfulness, honesty and purity we were aware; and he called us to the unity of God, and taught us not to associate anything with Him; he forbade us the worship of idols, and enjoined us to speak the truth, to be faithful to our trusts, to be merciful, and to regard the rights of neighbours; he forbade us to speak evil of woman, or to eat the substance of orphans; he ordered us to fly vices, and to abstain from evil; to offer prayers, to render alms, to observe the fast. We have believed in him, we have accepted his teachings."[1]

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[1] *The Spirit of Islam*, pp. 100, 101.

Such the testimony of the followers to their Prophet's teaching, such the witness that they bore who gave their lives for him.

And what manner of man was he now when followers gathered round him? One day as he was talking to a rich man whom he desired to win to his cause—for to win the rich and powerful men meant life for those who followed him—a blind man came along and cried aloud: "O Prophet of God, teach me the way of salvation," but he did not listen. He was talking to the high-born and the well-to-do, and this blind beggar, why should he interrupt? And the blind beggar, knowing not that he was engaged, cried aloud again: "O Prophet of God, show me the way." The Prophet frowned and turned aside. The next day there came a message that for ever remains written in Al Qurān, "wherein he put it that all might remember." "The Prophet frowned and turned aside because the blind man came to him: and how dost thou know whether he shall peradventure be cleansed from his sins, or whether he shall be admonished and the admonition shall profit him? The man who is wealthy thou receivest respectfully; whereas it is not to be charged on thee, that he is not cleansed: but him who cometh unto thee earnestly seeking his salvation, and who feareth God, dost thou reject. By no means shouldst thou act thus."[1] Ever after, when the Prophet saw the blind man, he treated him with great respect, saying: "This man is welcome, on whose account my Lord hath reprimanded me;" and he made him governor of Medina twice.

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[1] Al Qurān, chap. 80. "He frowned." Sale's Qurān does not give the verses—a great inconvenience.

So great a man was the Prophet of Arabia, speaking out the word of rebuke to himself as readily as of admonition to his followers. Such a man was Muhammad the Prophet.

But the persecution is terrible and grows more terrible, and at last his disciples fly in every direction, till all are gone but one, and the Prophet, who will not fly, and his uncle who has never joined him, Abū Tālib, the noble. He comes to him and says: " O son of my brother, give up this work, resign this hopeless cause." " Nay," said the Prophet, " O my uncle, if they placed the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left, to force me to renounce my work, verily I would not desist therefrom until God made manifest His cause, or I perished in the attempt." And then, because the human heart in him is broken, because his uncle, his protector, his beloved, is turning from him, he throws his mantle across his face to hide his suffering, and turns to go away. Then the voice of his uncle cries after him: " Stop, stop, speak what thou wilt; by the Lord, I will never abandon thee, no, never."[1]

But now the uncle dies. It is " the year of mourning," for worse, worse a thousandfold, Khadīja dies, his wife, his only love, his darling. He is alone, after six and twenty years of perfect wedded life—alone.

Sometimes the Prophet tries to win a few converts, among traders visiting Mecca, and one pledge taken by six converts has come down to us. It was taken on the hill of Akaba, and is called the pledge of Akaba. " We will not associate anything with God; we will not steal, nor commit adultery, nor fornication; we will not kill our children; we will abstain from calumny and slander; we will obey the Prophet in everything that is right; and we will be faithful to him in weal and sorrow."[1]

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[1] *The Spirit of Islam*, p. 111.

At last, only one faithful old man, Abū Bakr, and Ali remain with the Prophet, and he resolves to fly. His enemies had cooped him up in the small house, and here assassins tried to reach him, and he escaped by a window. And lo! it is the year A.D. 622, that men call the Hijra, the Hegira, the leaving of Mecca, but the beginning of the Musalman Era. The fugitives are chased; a price is set on the Prophet's head. "We are but two," says old Abū Bakr, quaking. "Nay," says Muhammad, "we are three; God is with us."[2]

He flies to Medina, and there they welcome him, and there disciples begin to crowd around him, and he is made the ruler of the State. But see, his enemies follow him from Mecca, hosts of those who persecuted and who tortured his followers, and his own band is small, while the hosts of the enemy are mighty. They join in battle—the battle of Badr. The Prophet cries aloud: "O Lord! if this little band were to perish, there will be none to offer unto Thee pure worship."[3] There is a furious struggle; blasts of bitter wind and sand seem to fight for the Muslims. The victory is won, for the forces of the divine Power are with him, and he is indeed to be seen by all men as the Prophet of the Lord. This is Muhammad's first bloodshed—repelling an attack. He had ever been tender, compassionate, "the womanish", his enemies called him; but now he is no longer a private individual, forgiving all wrongs done to himself; he is ruler of a State, general of an army, with duties to the followers who trust him. The days are coming when the crimes that as a man he would have forgiven, as ruler he must punish, and Muhammad the Prophet is no weak sentimentalist. After the victory of Badr two men only were executed, and, contrary to Arab usage, the prisoners were, by the Prophet's order, treated with the greatest kindness, the Muslims giving them bread and keeping only dates for themselves.

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[1] *The Spirit of Islam*, pp. 119, 120.

[2] Ibid., p. 126.

[3] Ibid., p. 145.

Now follow years of struggle, and years of trouble, years of difficulty, of quarrels amongst his followers, of the thronging of enemies around him. But there is one scene so beautiful that I must stop a moment upon it. There has been a battle and a victory, and the spoil has been divided; and those who have followed him longest have not shared the spoils, and there is anger and complaint, and he speaks:

"Ye Ansār. I have learnt the discourse ye hold among yourselves. When I came amongst you, you were wandering in darkness, and the Lord gave you the right direction; you were suffering, and He made you happy; at enmity among yourselves, and He has filled your hearts with brotherly love and concord. Was it not so, tell me?" "Indeed, it is even as thou sayest," was the reply; "to the Lord and his Prophet belong benevolence and grace." "Nay, by the Lord," continued the Prophet, "but ye might have answered, and answered truly, for I would have testified to its truth myself: 'Thou camest to us rejected as an impostor, and we believed in thee; thou camest as a helpless fugitive, and we assisted thee; poor and an outcast, and we gave thee an asylum: comfortless, and we solaced thee.' Ye Ansār, why disturb your hearts because of the things of this life? Are you not satisfied that others should obtain the flocks and the camels, while ye go back to your homes with me in your midst? By Him who holds my life in His Hands, I shall never abandon you. If all mankind went one way and the Ansār another, verily I would join the Ansār. The Lord be favourable unto them and bless them, and their children, and their children's children." They wept, the rough warriors, until their "tears ran down upon their beards", says the chronicler: "Yea Prophet of God, we are well satisfied with our share."[1]

O you, who know nothing of the great Arabian Prophet, do you not feel his fascination—the power in him that made men suffer tortures and face death for his sake, that has made the love for him last through the centuries; and yet—so much did he insist on his own imperfections, "I am only a man"—even that love has never deified him.

And so things went on for ten years, and then comes the end. And when prayers were over, they lift him up in the mosque, too weak to stand, Ali and Fazl on either side to hold him up, and he raises his feeble voice and cries: "Muslims! if I have wronged any one of you, here I am to answer for it; if I owe aught to anyone, all I may happen to possess belongs to you." One man says that he owes him three dirhems and the coins are paid, the last debt to be discharged on earth.[2] It is the last visit to the mosque, he is called home, his work accomplished. He lies praying, and his voice sinks to a feeble whisper; it is the 8th June, A.D. 632, and the Prophet leaves his worn-out body, to watch over, from a higher sphere, the religion he had founded and guarded.

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[1] *The Spirit of Islam*, pp. 197, 198.

[2] Ibid., p. 218.

A noble life, a marvellous life; verily a Prophet of the Lord. And withal so simple, frugal, humble, patching his own worn-out cloak, clouting his own shoes, when thousands were bowing to him as Prophet—and gentle to all around. "Ten years," said Anas his servant, "was I about the Prophet and he never said so much as 'Uff' to me."[1]

Two main accusations have been brought against him—one, that in his later years he married nine wives. True. But do you mean to tell me that the man who in the full flush of youthful vigour, a young man of four and twenty, married a woman much his senior, and remained faithful to her for six and twenty years, at fifty years of age when the passions are dying, married for lust and sexual passion? Not thus are men's lives to be judged. And if you look at the women whom he married, you will find that by every one of them an alliance was made for his people, or something was gained for his followers, or the woman was in sore need of protection.

But, they say, he preached war and extermination, and brutal bloody slaying of the unbeliever. It has ever been held, and laid down by the Muslim legists that when there are two commands, one of which is absolute, such as: "Slay the infidel"; and the other conditional, such as: "Slay the infidel when he attacks you and will not let you practise your religion," that the condition, the limitation, is to be added to every such absolute command; and this ruling is borne out over and over again by the words of Al Qurān itself, as well as by the practice of the Prophet. I will not put it in my words, lest you should think I speak as an advocate, but in the words of the teaching that he gave while still he lived among men. I find him declare as to the "infidels":

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[1] *The Spirit of Islam*, p. 221.

"That if they desist from opposing thee, what is already past shall be forgiven them: but if they return to attack thee, the exemplary punishment of the former opposers of the Prophets is already past, and the like shall be inflicted on them. Therefore fight against them, until there be no opposition in favour of idolatry, and the religion be wholly God's. If they desist, verily God seeth that which they do; but if they turn back, know that God is your patron; He is the best patron and the best helper."[1] I read: "Invite men unto the way of thy Lord, by wisdom and mild exhortation; and dispute with them in the most condescending manner: for thy Lord well knoweth him who strayeth from His path, and He well knoweth those who are rightly directed. If ye take vengeance on any, take a vengeance proportionable to the wrong which hath been done you: but if ye suffer wrong patiently, verily this will be better for the patient. Wherefore do thou bear opposition with patience; but thy patience shall not be practicable unless with God's assistance. And be not thou grieved on account of the unbelievers: neither be thou troubled for that which they subtly devise; for God is with those who fear Him and are upright."[2] Again;

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[1] Al Qurān, chap. 8.

[2] Ibid., chap. 17.

"Let there be no violence in religion."[1] "If they embrace Islām, they are surely directed; but if they turn their backs, verily unto thee belongeth preaching only."[2] And the Prophet gave a remarkable definition of an "infidel": "The infidels are unjust doers,"[3] evil actors, not those merely outside Islam, for, as we shall see, Islam, in the mouth of the Prophet, was by no means identical with that of his followers. "If they depart from you and fight not against you, and offer you peace, God doth not allow you to take or kill them."[4]

Is it fair to ignore these teachings, spoken in the midst of war, struggle and oppression, and pitch only upon the phrases which were spoken to inspire a minority to battle against a majority, as every general would speak when he is going into battle? Such were the words spoken by the Prophet as "absolute" commands.

And look at his own conduct as illustrating his teaching. Never a wrong done him that he did not forgive: never an injury that he was not ready to pardon. O my brothers, try to see a man as he is, not through a veil of prejudice. There are faults in every faith; there are errors in the practice of all men. Ignorant followers often act wrongly, where Prophets speak the truth. Judge then a religion by its noblest, and not by its worst, and then we shall learn to love each other as brothers, and not hate each other as bigots and as fanatics.

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[1] Al Qurān, chap. 2.

[2] Ibid., chap. 2.

[3] Ibid., chap. 2.

[4] Ibid., chap. 4.

Turn now from the life of the Founder—and you can never ignore the life of the Founder in any faith, for it is the heart and the mainspring of the faith—turn now to the teachings. First of all comes, of course, the Unity of God, a teaching found in every faith; the speciality, perhaps, of the faith of the Arabian Prophet being that he taught the unity of God as the King, the Ruler, the Governor; of Him whom we call Īshvara, the Supreme Logos. Over and over again the words ring out: "Say God is one God. He begetteth not neither is He begotten; and there is not anyone like unto Him."[1] That is the heart of the teaching; that is the supreme message; for every religion has a special word to speak and a special message to deliver. And as the great word of Hinduism is the universality of the Self, the God who is in all and all men one with him, so the great word of Islam is the unity of God as Ruler; there is none beside him, there is none second unto him. I might quote a dozen passages from Al Qurān in order to prove it. It is not necessary, though I add a couple:

"God! there is no God but He, the living, the self-subsisting; neither slumber nor sleep seizeth Him; to Him belongeth whatsoever is in heaven and on earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him, but through His good pleasure? He knoweth that which is past, and that which is to come unto them, and they shall not comprehend anything of His knowledge, but so far as He pleaseth. His throne is extended over heaven and earth, and the preservation of both is no burden unto

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[1] Al Qurān, chap. 112.

Him. He is the High, the Mighty."[1] Even the woodenness of the translation cannot disguise the splendour of this passage. "God hath borne witness that there is no God but He; and the Angels, and those who are endowed with wisdom, profess the same; who executeth righteousness; there is no God but He, the Mighty, the Wise."[2]

Then comes next in order the belief in God's Prophets; not in one Prophet only, but in all the Prophets. Over and over again, it is declared in Al Qurān, there is "no distinction between Prophets". All Prophets are from God; each is sent to his own people and does his own work. And you will find all through this Book of the Prophet that other Prophets are recognized by him and that he does not seek to interfere with them. "Every one of them believeth in God, and His Angels, and His Scriptures and His Apostles; we make no distinction at all between His Apostles."[3] "Say, we believe in God, and that which hath been sent down unto us, and that which was sent down unto Abraham, and Ishmael and Isaac, and Jacob, and the tribes, and that which was delivered to Moses, and Jesus, and the Prophets from their Lord; we make no distinction between any of them."[4] "Those who believe not in God and His Apostles, and would make a distinction between God and His Apostles, and say, we believe in some of the Prophets, and reject others of them, and seek to take a middle way in this matter; these are really unbelievers, and we have prepared for the unbelievers an ignominious punishment. But they who believe in God and His Apostles, and make no distinction between any of them, unto those will we surely give their reward; and God is gracious and merciful."[1]

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[1] Al Qurān, chap. 2.

[2] Ibid., chap. 3.

[3] Ibid., chap. 2.

[4] Ibid., chap. 3.

In perfect accord with this liberality, is the Prophet's use of the word Islam; often he says that there is but one religion, Islam; but what does Islam mean, and how does he use it? Islam means bowing to, surrender, and, religiously, surrender to the will of God. That is the one religion, says the Prophet, and truly it is so; perfect submission to the divine Will. But did it begin with the Prophet of Arabia? No, he said the very opposite: "Verily the true religion in the sight of God is Islam; and they who had received the Scriptures dissented not therefrom, until after the knowledge of God's unity had come unto them, out of envy among themselves."[2] "Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian; but he was of the true religion, one resigned unto God, and was not of the number of the idolators. Verily the men who are nearest of kin unto Abraham are they who follow him, and this Prophet and they who believe in him; God is the Patron of the faithful."[3] "Who is better in point of religion than he who resigneth himself unto God, and is a worker of righteousness, and followeth the law of Abraham the orthodox? Since God took Abraham for His friend."[4]

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[1] Al Qurān, chap. 4. According to this it would seem that Thesophists are the only true believers today.

[2] Ibid., chap. 3.

[3] Ibid., chap. 4.

[4] Ibid., chap. 5.

In that sense only is Islam the one religion; all men of every faith who surrender themselves to God are truly children of Islam, in the sense in which the Prophet of Islam used the word. It is nothing if his followers have narrowed it in later days. I appeal to the Prophet against his followers; as I have often appealed to the Christ against the Christians, and to the Rishis against the modern Hindus. "On a certain day we will call all men to judgment with their respective leader: and whosoever shall have his book given him into his right hand, they shall read their book with joy and satisfaction."[1] "As to the true believers, and those who Judaize, and the Sabians, and the Christians, and the Magians, and the idolators: verily God shall judge between them on the Day of Resurrection."[2] "We have not appointed thee a keeper over them (idolators); neither art thou a guardian over them. Revile not the idols which they invoke besides God, lest they maliciously revile God without knowledge."[3] "Unto every one of you have we given a law and an open path; and if God had pleased He had surely made you one people. But He hath thought fit to give you different laws, that He might try you in that which He hath given you respectively. Therefore strive to excel each other in good works; unto God shall ye all return, and then will He declare unto you that concerning which ye have disagreed."[4]

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[1] Al Qurān, chap. 17.

[2] Ibid., chap. 22.

[3] Ibid., chap. 6.

[4] Ibid., chap. 5.

Nor are other religions to be quarrelled with, even though idolatrous. All will appear before God on the last day and God will explain to them their disagreement. That is the great word: Unto God we all return. Leave the disputes till the light of God illumines us, and then we shall see the whole truth; now we see only a fragment. Leave it, as this Book bids you, till God explains it, till the Divine Spirit illuminates all men and they shall see the many faiths as one.

Next, in the exoteric religion, comes the belief in the angels; the four great archangels, who rule immediately under God himself, Mikail (Michael) the angel who protects; Jibrail (Gabriel) the angel who bears God's messages; Azrael, the angel of death; and Israfil, the angel of the last trumpet. They are the four great archangels like the Devarājas of the Hindus; then come the recording angels, who mark men's deeds, two attached to each man; then the hosts of angels all around us, who administer the divine laws, who carry out the divine will, who guide the paths of men, and shield and protect them in danger. These are the Devas of the Hindus. Then the inferior orders, the Jinns, that Theosophists would call the lower elementals, five orders, one for each of the five elements, as all occult science teaches. The sevenfold heaven, and the sevenfold hell is also taught, as in every exoteric faith. Lastly, there is Iblis (Satan), who rebelled against the Most High, and with his hosts of rebel angels fell from heaven, and became the prince of the air, and the enemy of man.

Now let us come to the duties of the individual. The first and foremost of all is righteousness; and there is one passage on that so beautiful, that I must read it to you. "It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces in prayer towards the East and the West; but righteousness is of him who believeth in God and the last day, and the Angels, and the Scriptures, and the Prophets; who giveth money for God's sake unto his kindred, and unto orphans, and the needy, and the stranger, and those who ask, and for redemption of captives; who is constant at prayer, and giveth alms; and of those who perform their covenant when they have covenanted and who behave themselves patiently in adversity and hardships, and in time of violence: these are they who are true, and these are they who fear God."[1] "Verily God commandeth justice, and the doing of good, and the giving unto kindred of what shall be necessary; and He forbiddeth wickedness, and iniquity, and oppression."[2] "Have we not made him (man) two eyes, and a tongue and two lips; and shown him the two highways of good and evil? Yet he attempteth not the cliff. What shall make thee to understand what the cliff is? It is to free the captive, or to feed in the day of famine the orphan who is of kin, or the poor man who lieth on the ground. Whoso doeth this, and is one of those who believe, and recommend perseverance unto each other, and recommend mercy unto each other; these shall be the companions of the Right Hand."[3] "A man's true wealth hereafter is the good he does in this world to his fellow-men. When he dies, people will ask, what property has he left behind him? But the Angels, who examine him in the grave, will ask, what good deeds hast thou sent before thee?"[1] In considering this teaching, it might be well for the student to remember the state in which the Prophet found the people, as described at the beginning of this lecture, and then to remember that *these very people practised what he taught*.

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[1] Al Qurān, chap. 2.

[2] Ibid., chap. 16.

[3] Ibid., chap. 90.

We will now consider his teaching on women. How the world has misunderstood the Prophet of Arabia in his teachings about women! They say he taught that they had no souls. Why slander God's Prophet? Listen to what he really taught. "Whoso doeth evil shall be rewarded for it, and shall not find any patron or helper beside God; but whoso doeth good works, whether he be male or female, and is a true believer, they shall be admitted into paradise and shall not in the least be unjustly dealt with."[2] "Verily, the Muslims of either sex, and the true believers of either sex, and the devout men and the devout women, and the men of veracity and the women of veracity, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women, and the alms-givers of either sex, and the men who fast, and the women who fast, and the chaste men and the chaste women, and those of either sex who remember God frequently: for them hath God prepared forgiveness and a great reward."[3] "I will not suffer the work of him among you who worketh to be lost, whether he be male or female; the one of you is from the other."[4]

[1] *The Spirit of Islam*, p. 135, from a sermon of the Prophet.
[2] Al Qurān, chap. 4.
[3] Ibid., chap. 34.
[4] Ibid., chap. 3.

Moreover, a great respect to women was inculcated by the Prophet! "O men: fear your Lord, who hath created you out of one man, and out of him created his wife, and from them two hath multiplied many men and women; and fear God by whom ye beseech one another, and respect women who have borne you, for God is watching over."[1] "Men's souls are naturally inclined to covetousness; but if ye be kind to women and fear to wrong them, God is well acquainted with what ye do."[2]

Nor were the teachings of the Prophet confined to generalities; he lays down the law by which women are to be treated in matters of inheritance. ✓ The law of Musalmans regarding women has been a model. They have been guarded in their own property; they cannot be deprived of a share of the inheritance from their parents, from their brothers, ✓ from their husbands. But aye, they say, Polygamy! There is the blot as regards woman; true; but who are they who judge? And do they remember that the law was given to a people plunged in licentiousness of the grossest kind, who were limited by it to four wives? I read in the Old Testament of polygamy in the Friend of God, and the man after God's own heart: the New Testament does not forbid it save for the bishop or deacon, of whom alone it is said that he must be the husband of one wife. So also I read in the old Hindu books of polygamy. It is so easy to try to pick holes in another man's faith, but what westerner shall dare to speak against the limited polygamy of the East so long as there is prostitution in the West? There is no monogamy as yet in the world save here and there, among the purer living men. It is not monogamy where there is one legal wife, and mistresses out of sight. In thus speaking, I do not speak to attack, but to strive that men may give justice to each other. One man and one woman, that is the true marriage; all else is evil. But most men are not yet pure enough for that, and in the scales of justice the polygamy of the East which guards, shelters, feeds and clothes the wives, may weigh heavier than the prostitution of the West, which takes a woman for lust, and throws her on the streets when lust is satiated. Judge both as evil, but do not let the Christian blame his brother for the sin that both commit. Polygamy is evil, my Musalman brothers; and remember that your own Prophet told you that you should never take a second wife unless you could love her as much as the first, and treat her with absolute equality and justice; and what man can love two women with equal love and equal justice? If that be not done, then more than one wife is not permitted by the Prophet, and I think he said it so that gradually monogamy might take the place of polygamy, and that this shame might be wiped away from his faith.

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[1] Al Qurān, chap. 4.

[2] Ibid., chap. 4

Tenderness to parents is inculcated—one quotation must suffice: "Thy Lord hath commanded that ye worship none beside Him; and that ye show kindness unto your parents, whether the one of them, or both of them, attain to old age with thee. Wherefore say not unto them, fie on you! Neither reproach them, but speak respectfully unto them; and submit to behave humbly towards them out of tender affection, and say: O Lord, have mercy upon them both, as they nursed me when I was little."[1]

And how just and liberal is the treatment enjoined towards slaves; "Unto such of your slaves as desire a written instrument allowing them to redeem themselves on paying a certain sum, write one, if ye know good in them: and give them of the riches of God, which He hath given you."[2]

Let us come to the personal duties which have to be performed. The daily repetition of the Kalimah or Creed: "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is His Prophet." Zakāt, the giving of alms, to be used among the strangers and the poor and the orphans and the captives; alms of grain and fruits, of merchandise, of cattle and money. "Alms are to be distributed only unto the poor and the needy, and those who are employed in collecting and distributing the same, and unto those whose hearts are reconciled, and for the redemption of captives, and unto those who are in debt and insolvent, and for the advancement of God's religion and unto the traveller."[3] "And whatever alms ye shall give, or whatever vow ye shall vow, verily God knoweth it; but the ungodly shall have none to help them. If ye make your alms to appear, it is well; but if ye conceal them and give them unto the poor, this will be better for you, and will atone for your sins; and God is well informed of that which ye do. The direction of them belongeth not unto thee, but God directeth whom He pleaseth. The good that ye shall give in alms shall redound unto yourselves; but ye shall not give unless out of desire of seeing the face of God."[1] And how beautiful is the following, from a sermon of the Prophet: he had been saying that a good man giving alms and concealing them is stronger than anything in God's creation and he went on: "Every good act is charity. Your smiling in your brother's face is charity. An exhortation addressed to your fellow-men to do virtuous deeds is equal to alms-giving. Putting a wanderer in the right path is charity; assisting the blind is charity; removing stones and thorns and other obstructions from the road is charity; giving water to the thirsty is charity."[2] Salāt, the five stated times of prayer—very beautiful and noble are the prayers. Roza, the thirty days' fast of Ramzan. Hajjitha, the pilgrimage to Mecca, if a man can do it leaving sufficient support for those he leaves behind him. These are the five duties incumbent on all. Wine is strictly forbidden.

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[1] Al Qurān, chap. 17.

[2] Ibid. chap. 24.

[3] Ibid, chap. 9.

We must pass on. We have not the time to deal, and it matters not, with the great division into Sunnis and Shīahs, and the question of Imāms—interesting truly; but I must leave that untouched?

After the exoteric side of a religion comes its philosophy. Now here in modern Islām there is much to miss; but what Islām was in the days of the might of its thought no words can be too strong to express. "Acquire knowledge," the Prophet says in one of his sermons, "because he who acquires it in the way of the Lord performs an act of piety; who speaks of it praises the Lord; who seeks it adores God; who dispenses instruction in it bestows alms; and who imparts it to its fitting objects performs an act of devotion to God. Knowledge enables its possessor to distinguish what is forbidden from what is not; it lights the way to heaven; it is our friend in the desert, our society in solitude, our companion when bereft of friends; it guides us to happiness; it sustains us in misery; it is our ornament in the company of friends; it serves as an armour against our enemies. With knowledge, the servant of God rises to the height of goodness and to a noble position, associates with sovereigns in this world, and attains to the perfection of happiness in the next."[1]

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[1] Al Qurān, chap. 2.

[2] *The Spirit of Islam*, p. 135:

There is a word of the Prophet which seems to me so striking, so unexpected, that I repeat it here: "The ink of the scholar is more valuable than the blood of the martyr." Unexpected declaration for a Prophet for whom so many had been martyred. And yet how profoundly true. Ali, the beloved, the son-in-law of the Prophet—from him sprang all Islām's learning and the wonderful outburst of her knowledge—would lecture amid struggle and warfare. He would stand up to teach, and to bid young men study and learn and master the sciences above all other things. And there is a definition given of science which is worth quoting: "Enlightenment of the heart is its essence; truth its principal object; inspiration its guide; reason its accepter: God its inspirer; and the words of man its utterer."[2] Not many grander definitions of science than that have been spoken by human lips.

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[1] *The Spirit of Islam*, pp. 531, 532.

[2] Ibid., p. 537.

For one hundred years the followers of Alī studied, while the other side of the Musalman world was fighting and conquering; one hundred years of quiet study, and then the work began; and what a work! From the eighth century till the fourteenth in the hand of the child of Islam is gripped the torch of science. Wherever they go they carry learning with them; they conquer, but where they conquer they found schools, universities. The universities of Cairo, of Baghdad, of Cordova in far western Spain, grow up under the shadow of the Prophet. Christian Europe crowds to Andalusia, to learn from the Musalman teacher the elements of forgotten science; they bring astronomy, they translate the Siddhānta of India and other books; they write treatises on astronomy, on chemistry, on mathematics. Pope Sylvester II, who sat on the Papal throne of Christendom, as a youth was a student in the University of Cordova, and learned there the mathematics that brought him later under the charge of heresy and of being the child of the devil.

They invent; what do they not invent? They take up mathematics from the Hindu and the Greek; they discover equations of the second degree; then the quadratic; then the Binomial theorem; they discover the sine and cosine in trigonometry; they discover or invent spherical trigonometry; they make the first telescope; they study the stars; they measure the size of the earth within a degree or two by measurements taken on the shores of the Red Sea. What are these men who grow up under Islam? They make a new architecture; they discover a new music; they teach scientific agriculture; they bring manufactures to the highest pitch of excellence; but is that all? No. In philosophy they are still greater; in philosophy they dive into the very Being of the Supreme; they declare the One Absolute, and the relation of the many to the One: they proclaim the unity of the human Spirit with the Divine: they deal with time and space, and the acute metaphysical brain of Arabia writes the most marvellous philosophic truths, pure Vedānta, as all true knowledge ends in that. The names of Ibn Sīna and Ibn Rushid here stand supreme.

Such the outburst of learning for six centuries that followed on the footsteps of the Prophet. Oh! if my brothers of Islam today would take these great works of their mighty men, and translate them into modern tongues; if they would teach them, as they do not teach them, to their boys; if they would train them, as they do not train them, in the knowledge of their own philosophy; then they would lift high the name of Islam among the philosophies of the world; and every child of Islam who is an educated man should know this teaching as a Hindu knows his Vedānta and so should be able to justify his Prophet in the eyes of the intellect of the world.

I said that part of a religion is mysticism, and Islam must have a mystic side. Ali again the beginner, and the followers of Ali the transmitters. In the year following the flight from Mecca, forty-five poor men bound themselves together to follow God and His Prophet, to live as a community, and to observe ascetic practices. It is the seed of Sufism, the mystic side of Islam. They teach that "all is from God".[1] They teach there is nought save God and that all the universe is but a mirror of Him. They teach that there is one perfect beauty and that all that is beautiful is only a ray from Him. They teach there is only one love, the love of God, and all other loves are only loves as they form part of that. They teach that He alone is true Being and that all else is non-being, and that man who is Himself can by illumination rise from non-being to Being and return whence he came. Ah! see how they have sung of His love, the devotion which breathes in the poetry of Persia:

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[1] Al Qurān, chap. 4.

"Thou art absolute Being; all else is but a phantasm,
For in Thy Universe all beings are one.
Thy world-captivating Beauty, in order to display its
    perfections,
Appears in thousands of mirrors, but it is one.
Although Thy Beauty accompanies all the beautiful,
In truth the unique and incomparable Heart-enslaver
    is one."[1]

And again:

"Not-Being is the mirror of absolute Being,
Whence is apparent the reflection of God's splendour.
When Not-Being became opposed to Being
A reflection thereof was at once produced.
That Unity was manifested through this Plurality;
One, when you enumerate it, becomes many.
Numeration though it has One for its basis,
Hath, notwithstanding, never an end.

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[1] Jāmi

Since Not-Being was in its essence clear,
Through it the hidden Treasure became manifest.
Repeat the tradition: 'I was a hidden Treasure,'
That thou mayest plainly behold the hidden mystery.
Not-Being is the mirror, the universe is the reflection, and man
Is the personality concealed in it like the eye in the reflection.
Thou art the eye of the reflection, while He (God) is the light of the eye;
By means of that eye the Eye of God beholds itself.
The world is a man, and man is a world."

No clearer explanation than this is possible:

" When thou lookest well to the root of the matter
He is both the Seer and the Eye and the Vision." [1]

And then listen how in the thirteenth century Sufism taught the truth of evolution which Darwin taught Christendom in the nineteenth:

" I died from the mineral, and became a plant.
I died from the plant, and reappeared in an animal.
I died from the animal and became a man.
Wherefore then should I fear? When did I grow less by dying?
Next time I shall die from the man,
That I may grow the wings of the angel.
From the angel, too, must I seek advance, 'all things shall perish save His Face.'

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[1] *Gulshan-i-Raz.*

Once more shall I wing my way above the angels;
I shall become that which entereth not the imagination.
Then let me become naught, naught: for the harp-
string
Cryeth unto me: ' Verily, unto Him shall we return.' "[1]

Sufism, according to the *Awarifu-d-ma'ārif*[2] teaches how the Path is to be trodden. This is divided into three stages: Shari'at, the Law; Tarīkat, the Way; Hakikat, the Truth. These are thus illustrated: A man asked a Shaikh—spiritual teacher—what were the three stages. He answered: " Go and strike each of the three men you see sitting there." He went and struck the first; the man leapt to his feet and returned the blow. He struck the second; the man flushed up, made a motion to rise, clenched his fists, but restrained himself. He struck the third; the man took no notice. " The first," said the Shaikh, " is in the Law; the second in the Way; the third in the Truth."

The Prophet Muhammad is, of course, recognised as the supreme authority, but to tread the Path a Shaikh is necessary, and the Murid, the disciple, must show him the most absolute devotion and submission; he must obey him in everything without reserve or hesitation: " If thou art bidden to drench thy prayer-carpet in wine, do it; for the Shaikh knows all that thou knowest, and more." Prolonged meditation is enjoined, and goes up the various stages up to Wajd—Samādhi—

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[1] The *Masnavi*, a compilation of the sayings of the Dervish Jalalud-din Rumi.

[2] A book written in the thirteenth century by Shaikh Shahāb-ud-Dīn. Companion in Sufism to the *Divan-i-Khwāja Hāfiz*. Translated by Lieutenant-Colonel H. Wilberforce Clarke.

ecstasy. Rābi'a, a woman mentioned by Ibn Khallikān (A.D. 1211-1282), would go to the house-top at night and say; "O God! hushed is the day's noise; with his beloved is the lover. But I have Thee for my Lover, and alone with Thee, I joy." Only God contents the Sufi; the dervishes say: "Neither fear we hell, nor desire we heaven." Asceticism of the most severe kind is enjoined, fasts lasting many days, and other austerities. But they are the most liberal of men: "The ways unto God are as the number of the breaths of the sons of men."

That is the mysticism of Islam, and oh! that Islam may again embrace it within its pale, as it does not embrace it today. When Islam thus recompletes itself, it will be ready to link itself in brotherly love with other creeds. For the blessed union between the faiths of the world does not lie in the exoteric side, where forms are different and ceremonies are varied, and each suits the idiosyncracies of its people, and speaks to God in its own tongue. The union of religions lies in the spiritual truth, lies in the philosophic ideas, and lies above all in the mysticism whereby man knows himself as God, and seeks to return to Him whence he came.

Hindus are not of the faith of Islam; that matters not. They say, *So'ham; Tat Tvam Asi* (I am That; That art Thee;) the Sufi says: An-al-haq; Haq-tu-i; I am God; Thou art God. How then are they different, when God is One? Try to understand it and you will love it; then let us learn to love and not to hate; let us learn to understand and not to criticise; let us love our own faith above all, but respect the belief of our neighbours. Muhammad, Christ, Zarathushtra, Moses, the Rishis and the Bodhisattvas stand in one mighty Lodge, Guardians of humanity and of nations; they know no difference between each other, and we, the humblest of their followers, their children, let us catch one gleam of their all-embracing love. Only by love can they come to us: Muhammad cannot come to his own, as he is longing to do, until they throw away their bigotry, their narrowness, and love all men as he loves them all; he is yours, O Muslims, but he is ours as well; we claim every Prophet that God has given to men; we love them all: we revere them all; we bow ever before them all in lowliest reverence. May the God of all nations grant that we, his children, shall no longer struggle in his name, whether we call him Mahādeva, Vishnu, Allah, Ahuramazda, Jehovah or Father—whatever name our baby lips may lisp, there is one God, there is none other, and we all worship Him.

SIKHISM

A CONVENTION LECTURE

SIKHISM

In dealing with Sikhism we are in face of what may be called a double movement. Fundamentally religious in its beginnings, it was forced by the pressure of circumstances into a militant organization. Most people in thinking of the Sikh think of a gallant warrior, of a splendid fighter. But we shall err very seriously if we look on him, we, who are students of religion, as only, or even fundamentally, a fighter. That came by the pressure of circumstances, by the pressure of his environment; but the movement itself, in its lasting character, is fundamentally a religious movement. It is a movement which grew up in the midst of Hinduism, having in the mind of its great Founder, Guru Nānak, the idea of joining together the Hindus and the Musalmans in one league of love to God and service to man. The thought of Guru Nānak—as we find it expressed not only in his words, but far more in his life—was to join together these warring elements of the Indian people on a platform that both could accept.

That platform is fundamentally love to God, Bhakti, devotion—Bhakti to God and also to the Guru, the Teacher, for the very name Sikh comes from the word sishya, disciple, and this idea of love to God and to the Teacher is the very basis and the very root of Sikhism. It is a movement, then, primarily of devotion.

In its philosophy it is Hindu, but as a movement it is reformatory in its nature, striving against the formalism of the time, against the ceremonialism of the time, in order to find the life which lay below the form, the essence of the truth that had inspired the ceremonies. In the time of Guru Nānak, as too often in the history of the world, a great religion had grown more and more formal and men were starving on the husk of the grain rather than eating the grain itself. Guru Nānak sought to find the grain, and in so doing threw aside, to a large extent, the husk; he strove to lead men to see the reality of religion, the life of religion, the essence of religion, and to see that life and essence in love to God and the Guru, in love to men as children of the one God. You may almost sum up in that phrase the very essence of Sikhism. We shall find presently in his life how he tried to draw together the warring elements around him. We shall see presently in his life how it was one song of praise and love to God, how he was ever seeking the Supreme and, having found Him, strove to teach his fellows how they too, by devotion, might reach the same knowledge. That is the thought that I would have in your minds in the study of Sikhism, and I shall show you presently how that is carried out by the teachings in the Sikh scriptures.

But before I do that, and before I speak of the life of the great saint, I must hastily sketch for you, as it were, the historic setting of Sikhism, so that you may understand how it came to pass that from a movement essentially of Bhakti, it became identified with the most gallant military spirit. And in doing this, I cannot, of course, give all the details that you may read for yourselves. But there is ever the difficulty in the minds of most that they lay too much stress on details in their study and lose sight of the broad outlines that alone render the whole intelligible. Professor Huxley used to complain of students of science that they lost sight of the forest in studying the trees, and that is continually true. Men lose themselves in a maze of details and they fail to grasp the unifying principles in history, and to see the main trend and current and meaning of events. Now all that I want to do, as regards the history of the Sikhs, is to give you a broad outline which will make you understand how it came to be what it was.

There were ten Gurus, one after the other, in unbroken succession, Guru Nānak being the first, the purest, the saintliest and the noblest of all, the life, the heart and soul of his followers. We will take his life presently (A.D. 1469-1539); for the moment I but name him. He was followed by the second, Guru Angad (1539-52), of whom there is little to be said, save that he gathered together many of the songs and the teachings of his predecessor and so began the compilation of the Sikh Scriptures, the Ādi Grantha Sāhab. Then comes the third, Guru Amār Dās (1552-74), of whom one point is specially noticeable—that he met in conference the Musalman Emperor, Akbar, on matters of religion; showing how the spirit of Guru Nānak was ruling, and the attempt was being carried on to bring about peace between the great rival faiths of Hinduism and Islam. Then there is the next Guru, the fourth, Guru Rām Dās (1574-81), still on terms of friendship with the liberal-minded and magnanimous Akbar, who gives him a piece of land at Amritsar, where he digs out the famous tank. Then the fifth, Guru Arjunmal (1581-1606), the builder of the famous Golden Temple, marks a point in the history of the Sikhs; for this building gives them a centre, a home, a rallying-place. The temple is first dedicated to Hari, Hari Mandir it was called, for Guru Nānak ever taught that in the name of Hari lay salvation. Later it became the Darbār Sāhab. Now the Sikhs have got, as it were, their own place. They begin to gather round the temple; they begin to form a definite community. Arjunmal, the religious teacher, becomes the head of the definitely organized religious community gathered at a special spot—the beginning of the Sikh State. His great work, again, is to gather together the teachings of his predecessors, and it is he who definitely compiles and who gives out the Ādi Grantha Sāhab; composed partly of the songs and the teachings of the preceding Gurus, partly also from the songs of the Saints in the Sikh movement, and so on.

Now comes the first touch which tells of the future struggle. Jehangir is on the throne of Akbar, less liberal, less magnanimous than his predecessor. His son rebels against him. Guru Arjunmal, apparently without any reason, or for a reason which really was no reason at all, was accused of sympathizing with the rebel son. I say "no reason," because the root of the accusation appears to have lain in the anger and the jealousy of the powerful minister to whom he had refused his child in marriage; and this minister, stirring up the suspicions of Jehangir against him, induces the Emperor to seize the Guru and imprison him. He dies from the hardships of the imprisonment.

There is the point where the community, which was purely religious and peaceful, begins to be led by this aggression on its Teacher and its Ruler, into the path that will make it a great military body. Jehangir is followed by Aurangzib, and things grow worse and worse under that fanatical ruler. The succeeding Guru, the sixth, Guru Har Govind (1606-45), begins definitely in self-defence to organize the Sikhs; he binds them into a body apart alike from Hindu and Musalman, no longer a body to join the two, but a body apart and separate from both. The State of the Sikh is beginning to grow up, and now commence warfare and struggle, scattered skirmishing, scattered fighting, a sharing in the fights around them, ever welding the Sikhs more and more together as a fighting body. The seventh Guru, Guru Har Rai (1645-61), of whom little is said, is quiet and peaceful, but around are more struggles, still increasing war, increasing strife, increasing military spirit, until the religious side, as it were, almost goes into the background, save for the inspiration and the binding force it gives. Then comes a Guru, Guru Har Kisan (1661-64), who is but a child, a child of six years, dying when he is nine years old, to be followed by the ninth Guru, Guru Tegh Bahādur (1664-75). His life is very troubled, and he is cruelly murdered by Aurangzib, and is succeeded by his son, the last, the tenth Guru, Guru Govind (1675-1708), who gives to the Sikhs their great military organization, and makes them into the body that raised, under Ranjit Singh, the Sikh Empire in the Punjab.

On this tenth Guru we must pause for a while. A mere boy, he flies for his life after his father's murder, and for some twenty years he remains in retirement, thinking out his mission. Naturally, he broods over his father's murder, naturally he is bitter against his father's enemies; the hatred of the Musalman seems to become almost a duty for the son, for the Guru, and therefore for the Sikh. The old friendship has vanished; the blood of a father lies between the Guru and the Musalman Emperor. For some twenty years, as I say, he remains in retirement, thinking over the work that lies before him, thinking over his work as a religious teacher, but still more as a military organizer. And, at last, he comes out from his retirement ready to do a mighty work, prepared for his life's mission. He is determined definitely to separate off the Sikhs from all possibility of confusion with men of any other faith. Five devoted disciples he calls around him, and with these five men and himself in the midst, he institutes the ceremony of Pahul, initiation, simple, warrior-like. He takes water; his wife happens to be passing with five kinds of sweetmeats, and he takes of the five sweetmeats, a little of each, and throws them into water. He stirs the water with a two-edged knife; he sprinkles it on the five men around him, and gives to each of them to drink, and they in turn sprinkle him and give him to drink, and he proclaims them as the Khālsā, the pure, and bids them add to their names the epithet of Singh, the Lion. These are the first initiated disciples, marked out from all others by special signs that every Sikh must carry on his person. The long hair, dividing him from the shaven Hindu; the comb; the two-edged dagger or knife; the steel bangle; the short breeches, coming to the knee. These are the five marks—the five

K's as they are called, because each begins with a 'K' in the vernacular—whereby he separates every Sikh from all surrounding him, and which the true Sikhs bear today. That is the ceremony which he lays down as the ceremony of initiation, and wherever five Sikhs are gathered together, there, he said, would be his spirit, and there the power of initiation. He is to be the last of the Gurus; after him no other teacher is to come; the power is to go into the hands of the Khālsā to be exercised by the council of its chiefs, the Guru Mātā; the authority for the Sikhs lies in the sacred book which, later, Guru Govind completes.

Now he is the warrior chief and the Sikhs flock around his standard. He fights, he struggles, he builds up a great army; his men are known by their marvellous courage, by the way they face great odds in battle; the same passion that we saw animating the Musalman in his conquering career after his great Prophet, is seen also in the warrior Sikh, and they died as joyfully as other men lived. No wonder that at first they carried all before them; yet, after much struggling, being but a few, after all, amid myriads, we find them beaten back in the struggle that they undertook with such heroism against overwhelming numbers, for these few had set themselves against the mighty Musalman Empire in the North.

They are but a few against myriads, but they are never discouraged, never terrified, never disheartened; their Guru is with them wherever they go, and where he is they are confident—he is beaten back, back, back, until at last, by a splendid effort, he turns and drives off the troops of the enemy; they pursue him no further.

The Well of Salvation the place is called, where that saving battle was fought.

It is after this, to encourage his followers, that he gives out the last of the Sikh Scriptures, the *Book of the Tenth King*, or Guru, *Daswin Pādshāhi*, the completion of the Ādi Grantha Sāhab.

Then comes the end. He is attacked by a Pathan, who quarrels with him over a matter of trade, a mere trifle, but the man threatens his life, and the warrior Guru strikes him down. He is dead. The sons of this man come, and he addresses them with kindness and favour; remembering the murder of his own father, he pities the sons whom he has made father-less; he takes them into service and confidence, and when he knows that his time is come, there is a strange scene. He speaks to one of these sons about the duty of revenge, about the slaying of the slayer of the kinsman, until at last he provokes him to strike him his own death-blow; he saves the young man from the anger of his followers, saying that he has but avenged his father's blood, and he must go free. He bids them follow the Scripture, bids them be faithful to the Khālsā, and dies.

Then, after he is gone, there is no more the Teacher; but, as I said, the real authority is the Ādi Grantha Sāhab, with the council of chiefs, and the Khālsā, the whole community of the Sikhs, wherein there was to be no difference of caste, no difference between man and man, all were to be brothers and were to be equal.

Then a brilliant story of military struggle and military success, crowned at last by the splendid victories of Ranjit Singh, the Lion of the Panjab (1797), who makes the Panjab practically the Sikh Empire. He dies in 1839. And then, ah! the saddest history of treachery, of betrayal, of brave warrior-souled and gallant men deceived and sold, struggling on desperately against all. The saddest of all stories, but the story of India over and over again, where brother has sold brother, where friend has sold friend, where Indian has betrayed Indian—that was all repeated in this story of the fall of the Sikh Empire. Never a story more heroic, never a story more pathetic, brave men struggling against overwhelming odds, so that even their own heroism could not save them, until the Empire broke entirely and the Panjab passed into the hands of the British troops in 1849. That is the outside setting.

Let us pass from that; let us see what was the faith, what the life, that gave to Sikhism its binding power, its marvellous heroism, its splendid strength. It is the life and the teaching of Guru Nānak, the sweetest of characters, and the saintliest of men.

From childhood a boy marked out, as all God's Prophets are marked out, as different from his fellow-men. The story of his childhood is not eventful, but it is very pathetic and very quaint. Quaint in this way, that he was born into a family of good people, of the commonest quality, like an eagle in the nest of a sparrow and the sparrows did not understand the eagle, and they could not make out what manner of creature this was. Quiet, reserved, silent, wandering away to meditate when other boys would be at play; what strange child is this, who will not learn as other boys learn, who will not play as other boys play, who when he goes to his teacher wants to know the mystic meaning of the letters, and angers the Pandit by asking questions that the Pandit—good man—cannot answer? always coming athwart his surroundings because he must know what is within, he cannot be satisfied with what is without. And there is nothing more troublesome to the commonplace man or woman than to be pressed with questions as to realities, when he finds himself quite comfortable on the safe cushions of formulae; and so Nānak, in his childhood, is a great trial to his father. Surely he must be mad; he is sitting for hours meditating and taking no food; he must be having fever. They bring a doctor to see him. Nānak asks the doctor whether he could cure the diseases of his soul. What kind of patient is this who greets his physician in that manner? Or take him when the ceremony of the sacred thread is to be performed. The story is so characteristic that I will give it to you, and I ought to say here that for all the quotations I am making, I am depending upon my Sikh friends, who have been good enough to translate them for me from their own books, so that I may have ground to go on which is sure.

"When everything was ready and the Purohit (the family priest) was about to invest him with it, Nānak turned round and enquired: 'Tell me, Panditji, of what use is this thread? What are the duties of the man who is invested with it? Why is it necessary to put it on?'

"'Nobody can perform any sacrificial ceremonies without putting it on,' said the Purohit, who was merely a village Pandit, and did not know the secret signification of the sacred thread; 'this thread purifies the wearer and entitles him to attend and perform all ceremonies.'

"'If a man who has put on this sacred thread,' said Nānak, 'does not change his ways, and leads an impure life, does this thread purify him and help him in any way in the end? Does not he reap the fruit of his actions?'

"'I do not know,' replied the Purohit, 'but it is ordained in the Shāstras, and we must follow our forefathers.'

"'From the cotton of compassion spin out the thread of love; make the knots of abstinence and truth; let your mind put on this thread; it is not broken, nor soiled, nor burned, nor lost. Praised be they who have put this on,' said Nānak.

"'You have spoken well,' said the Purohit, 'but look at all the expense and trouble your father has been put to, see all these friends and relations; they will be all disappointed if you won't put this on.'

"'I am truly sorry that I cannot oblige you,' said Nānak; 'I cannot put it on, and I will advise you also to think more about the essence of things than the form. Only by true conviction one gains respect, and by praising God and by living truthfully man reaches perfection.'

"At last his mother entreated him for her sake not to disappoint her. Then Nānak simply said: 'Mother, I obey,' took the thread and put it on."[1]

There you have a very characteristic story of this youth with the marks of a Prophet upon him, ever seeking the inner truth through the outer shows.

He grows into youth, and is a most unsatisfactory son to the good dull father, for he will not take up agriculture, he won't have a shop, and he won't travel in commerce. His trade consists in giving money or rather food to Sannyāsis, which his father thinks is not a good bargain, and finds little satisfactory, although Nānak thinks that it is the best bargain that can be made. What is to be done with such a young man. He sends him to his sister and her husband who love him. He takes service under a Nawāb, and serves faithfully and well; but he is ever giving away in charity, and at last wearies of the world, and determines to give up service, to give up the household life into which he has entered, to wander seeking for God, and for the realization of His love. There comes another characteristic scene with the Nawāb after he had left his service. The Nawāb sends for the young man, and after a time he comes. The Nawāb is angry because he has not come at once.

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[1] Life of Guru Nānak by Jogendra Singh in Central Hindu College Magazine, Benares.

"'I am not now your servant, Nawāb Sāhab,' was Nānak's reply. 'Now I am a servant of God.'

"'Do you believe in one God or many Gods?' enquired the Nawāb.

"'Only in one, indivisible, self-existent, incomprensible and all-pervading adorable God do I believe,' replied Nānak.

"'Then since you believe in one God, and I too believe in one God, your God must be the same as mine; so then if you are a firm believer, come with me to the mosque and offer prayers with us.'

"'I am ready,' said Nānak.

"His father-in-law was struck dumb with amazement, and he at once left the Court believing that Nānak had embraced Islām.

"It was Friday, and as the time for prayer was at hand the Nawāb got up and, accompanied by Nānak, proceeded to the mosque. When the Kāzi began to repeat the prayer the Nawāb and his party began to go through the usual bowing ceremony, but Nānak stood silently still. When the prayer was over the Nawāb turned towards Nānak, and indignantly asked: 'Why did you not go through the usual ceremonies? You are a liar and your pretensions are false. You did not come here to stand like a log.'

"'You put your face to the earth,' observed Nānak, 'while your mind was running wild in the skies; you were thinking of getting horses from Candahār, not offering prayers; and your priest, sir, while going automatically through the bowing process, was thinking of the safety of the mare which foaled only the other day. How can I offer prayers with those who go through customary bows and repeat words like a parrot?'

"The Nawāb acknowledged that he was really thinking of getting horses and all the time he was praying the thought harassed him, but the Kāzi was greatly displeased and turning towards Nānak showered a volley of questions."[1]

There is the spirit of the seeker for reality coming out again. He begins his wanderings. He goes wandering about, singing with a musician and a friend who follow him, Mardāna and Bālā, and he comes to a village where he needs food. There is a poor man, Lālu, a carpenter, a man of pure life, who welcomes the wandering Sannyasī, gives him his own bed, brings him warm food, and Nānak eats. Next day a rich banker in the town gives a great feast to Brahmaṇas, and invites Nānak to come and eat with them. Nānak goes, but he will not take the food. Says the host: "'Why don't you take my food?'

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[1] Ibid.

"'Because,' said Nānak, 'your food is not pure, for you have cooked this food for self-glorification; it is a tāmasic gift and therefore impure.'

"'You call my food impure while that of the low caste Lālu is pure? How is that?' asked Rai Bhag contemptuously.

"'You treat your guests irreverently and contemptuously,' said Nānak, 'that shows your tāmasic aims. I ate food cooked by Lālu, for it was cooked with love and brought with reverence, with no desire for repayment. You must learn a lesson from humble Lālu. Your food is full of blood.'

"'What proof have you that my food is impure,' demanded Rai Bhag angrily.

Nānak took Rai Bhag's food in one hand while in the other he took the food cooked by Lālu, and, as he pressed each, from Rai Bhag's food oozed out drops of blood while from that of Lālu oozed out milk.'[1]

Such was the way in which Guru Nānak taught the teaching ever bearing on reality and exposing show. Was he a Hindu? Was he a Musalman? Men quarrel as to which he was, for he was above the distinctions of outer creed and he loved all men and called himself nothing. When he came to die, after seventy years of noble life and priceless teaching, his disciples disputed as to what faith he really belonged; should he be burned as a Hindu, or should he be buried as a Musalman? And as they disputed, one lifted the sheet over the corpse, and the body had disappeared, and he was neither burned nor buried.

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[1] Ibid.

Such was the spirit of the great Teacher, as shown in his life and conduct, and in the teachings that he left behind him; they show the spirit that moved him—that profound devotion to the Supreme, that love for God that worldly men call madness, that passion and devotion that the Saints in every age and in every religion have felt. Philosophically he was a Hindu; his specialty is this profound Bhakti and his hatred of sham. Let us take his teaching and the teaching of his successors, for here we can make no difference, and see how they taught, and see the spirit of the teaching. I have, here, a large number of extracts from the Ādi Grantha Sāhab, classified under certain headings on which I had asked for specific Sikh teaching, so as to be able to give you an authoritative outline of that teaching, and I take passages from these Sikh translations, to show you exactly the nature of the teachings.[1]

First as to the Supreme. "Thou art I, I am Thou. Of what kind is the difference?" "In all the One dwells, the One is contained." "He Himself is One. and He Himself is many. He does not die nor perish, He neither comes nor goes. Nānak says that He is always contained in all."

You can catch the echo of the Upanishads thrown into more popular language, the deep thought of Hindu philosophy, put into a form for popular use.

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[1] I owe most of these to Sirdars Umrao Singh and Harbans Singh, who selected the illustrative passages and translated them.

One Omkāra, true Name, Maker, Spirit, fearless, unmalevolent, timeless Form. From no womb, Self-existent, great-bliss (or through Guru's favour) (to be realized). True from before; true from before the ages (Yugas); true is and true to be, O Nānak.
[Japa I.]

Signless, that none may cross, unreachable (or unknowable); No object (for the senses); Untouched by time or action; Of unborn essence; From no womb; Self-existent; Unconditioned; Unwavering; May I unto this True Verity be sacrifice. He hath no form, nor colour, nor outline; by the true Word He is to be

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The verification of the references may be rendered more easy by the subjoined description of the contents of the Ādi Grantha Sāhab, taken from the *History of the Sikhs*, by J. D. Cunningham, second edition, pp. 368-71.

The Ādi Grantha Sāhab is divided into parts as follows:
Japji, or Guru Mantra, by Guru Nānak.
Sodur Rehi Ras. „ with additions.
Kīrtan Sohila. „ „
31 §§ by forms of verse:
Śrī Rāga.
Majh.
Gaurī.
Assa.
Gujri.
Deva Gāndharī.
Bihāgrā.
Wiad Hans.
Sorath.
Dhanāsri.
Jeit Sirī.
Todī
Bairāri.
Teilang.
Sodhī.
Bilāwal.
Gand.
Rām Kali.
Nat Nārāyan.
Mati Gaura.
Marū.
Tokkāri.
Kedāra.
Bhairo.
Basant.
Sarang.
Mulār.
Kanrā.
Kalyān.
Parbhati.
Jai Jaiwanti.

Bhog.
Bhog ka Barū.

pointed out. He hath no mother, father, son, nor kindred, nor lust, nor wife, nor clan; Untinged (by Māyā); Untranscended; Higher than highest; Thou Light of all; Brahm in all vessels hid; His Light complete in every vehicle (heart). By Guru's teaching the adamant Portals throw ajar, with fearless gaze fixed firm. Having created beings, He placed over them time, (death), and kept all regulation under (His) control. By Guru's service the true wealth (they) find; by acting on (His) word freedom (they) gain. In a pure vessel (heart) only Truth may live; rare are they of conduct pure. Essence in the highest Essence merged; Nānak in Thee doth refuge find.

[Sorath I.]

I bow down (or glorify) the primal One, Omkāra;
Who hath spread out (this) water, land and sky;
The first Spirit, unmanifest, imperishable;
Whose light illuminates the fourteen lokas;
Abiding in the elephant and the ant alike;
Who knoweth as equal the ruler and pauper;
From form duality; the signless Spirit
Directly knowing; the inner controller of every vessel
(heart). [Guru.]

He Himself, the Formless (and) the Form; That One without qualities and with qualities; One alone is spoken of, O Nānak. That One alone is many.

[Guru v. Bavanakhhri.]

The Parabrahman, Supreme Lord, cometh not into wombs.
With Thy word createst Thou creation, and after making Thou pervadest it.
Thy form could not be seen, how shall I meditate on Thee?
Thou functionest in all; Thy power showeth (this)
Thy love fills treasures which are inexhaustible;
These jewels (of peace, etc.), are priceless.
[Guru v. Var-Maru.]

Countless (lit. crores) Avatāras of Vishṇu didst Thou make.
Countless Brahmāṇḍas are the abodes of Thy Law;
Countless Maheshvaras are created and absorbed;
Countless Brahmās Thou didst set to fashion the worlds:
So rich is my Lord,
Whose great qualities I cannot speak of in details;
Whom countless Māyās attend.
(The hearts of) countless beings are His resting place;
Countless are (the devotees) who embrace (lit. or draw close to) Thy limbs (personified for worship).
Countless the devotees who dwell with Hari.
Countless the Kings (lit. Lords of Umbrellas) who pay Thee homage.
Countless Indras standing at Thy portals;
Countless Heavens in Thy glance;
Countless (Thy) priceless Names;
Whose countless resonances sounded forth;
Countless journeys of wondrous action;

Countless Shakṭis and Shivās obedient to His will;
Countless the beings whom Thou nourishest;
In whose feet are countless Tīrthas (sacred places);
Countless pure ones repeat Thy dear name;
Countless worshippers render Thee worship;
Infinite Thy Expanse; there is no second;
Whose pure and spotless glories are countless;
Whose praise is sung by countless Brahmā-Ṛṣhis;
In the winking of an eye whose creations and absorptions are countless;
Countless Thy qualities that may not be numbered;
Countless wise men declare Thy knowledge;
Countless meditators meditate on Thee;
Countless ascetics perform austerities;
Countless Munīs sit in silence;
Unmanifest Lord, imperceptible Master,
Filling all hearts and controlling from within,
Wherever I look Thou dwellest there;
The Guru (or great one) illumined Nānak (with this knowledge). [Guru v. Bharon.]

Who hath no discus, mark, nor class, nor caste, nor sub-caste,
Of whom none can say: " He hath form, colour, outline or vesture,"
Changeless form shining through Anubhava (direct perception of innermost spiritual consciousness),
Whom we might call the Indra (Lord) of countless Indras, and King of kings.
Three worlds, lords of earth, Gods, men, demons and forest grass are saying, neti, neti (not this, not this).

Who can utter all Thy names? the wise declare Thy functional names (alone).

[Guru x. Japa.]

In every way I said, there was no other, O friend,
He dwells in all the continents and islands (dvīpas),
He fills all lokas. [Guru v. Devagandhāri]

His greatness the Veda doth not know;
Brahmā knoweth not His Mystery;
Avatāras know not His limit;
The supreme Lord, Parabrahm, is boundless.

[Guru v. Rāmkali.]

All are made liable to errors, the Maker alone does not err. [Guru i. Śrī Rāga.]

And then for worship; every Hindu knows the Ārati and the way in which light, and one thing after another, are offered to the image of the worshipped God. Guru Nānak deprecates the use of images in worship, and in his own Ārati offers the whole universe in the worship of Brahman, the Supreme,

Space itself (Thy) salver; the sun and moon (Thy) lamps;

The starry host thy pearls, O Father.
The fragrant breeze of the Malaya mountains (Thy) incense;
The wind waving (its) chawri (over Thee);
All forest vegetation (lit. vegetable kingdom) as flowers, O Light!
What a rejoicing (Ārati or hymn of praise) O Destroyer of fear (or samsāra); the Anāhat Shabda (the soundless or unstruck sound) sounds as (Thy) kettle-drum.
Thousands are Thy eyes; Nay! Nay! Thou hast none;
Thousands are Thy forms; Nay! Nay! Thou hast none;
Thousands are Thy holy feet; Nay! Nay! Thou hast none;
Thou art without nostril (lit. sense of smell) yet Thou hast a thousand nostrils;
This wondrous working of Thine bewilders (us),
In everything, O Glory! is Thy Light.
In every one the Light of That (Light) shines.
In Guru's presence (or by Guru's teaching) shineth forth that Light;
That is rejoicing (Ārati) which to Him is pleasing.

Such is his teaching. It breathes the purest spirit of devotion, that reaches beyond all forms, to the One Formless; and now and then a heart is found that feels greater passion of devotion for the ideal of the One than in dwelling on any of the forms in which the One manifests Himself. In Guru Nānak there is no denial of all the forms in which the Supreme is shown, but he takes the view of the Upanishaḍs, that there is one

Brahman, supreme over all, of whom all the Gods are but the partial manifestations, of whom the highest forms are but reflections of the Beauty.

When we are asked what it is he teaches as to creation, we find that the pure Vedāntic teaching, that the creation is but Māyā and by the power of Īshvara and Māyā all things come forth.

By will (lit. order) the forms come forth.

[Guru i. Japa.]

One Mother (Māyā) united with (God) gave birth (to) three acceptable children (lit. disciples);
One of them sends forth samsāra, the other provides and the third habitually dissolves.
As it pleaseth Him so (He) directeth (them), according to (His) will.
He looketh on but is not seen; great is the marvel, Hail to Him, Hail!
The primal, the unstained, without beginning, the indestructible, in every age (assuming) the same vesture.

[Guru i. Japa].

When the Maker causes emanation (or expansion),
Then the creation takes up infinite bodies;
Whenever Thou drawest in,
Then all the embodied merge in Thee.

[Guru x. Chaupai.]

There are hundreds of thousands of Ākāshas and Pātālas.
[Guru i. Japa.]

The limits of His creation cannot be known.
[Guru i. Japa.]

This world is the house of the True (one), the True (one) dwells therein.
[Guru ii. Asavar.]

This world is the temple of Hari, but awful darkness without the Guru.

Those who are led by the mind (lit. mind facing), these blind rustics worship Him as being distinct (lit. another).
[Guru iii. Prabhaṭi]

Here is Siddhā's question:

How is the world produced O man, (and) how can pain be destroyed?

Answer of Guru Nānak:

In Egoism the world has its birth, by forgetting the name (we) suffer.
[Guru i. Sidhgosht.]

As to the Jīva he teaches that the Jīva is the same in essence with the Supreme, and that by reincarnation and by karma, the Jīva can realize himself and know that there is no difference. Endless births he speaks of, and he repeats that phrase that we find with the Jaina as with the Hindu, that human birth is difficult to gain and that in human birth is liberation to be found.

This Jīva is not subject to death.

[Guru v. Gauri.]

In the body is mind, in the mind is the True [one]
That True one merging in [uniting with] the True one is absorbed.

[Guru i. Rāg Dhanāsri.]

The same thing is in the body which is in the Brahmānda;
Whosoever seeks finds.

[Pippa Bhakta Dhanasri.]

Neither caste nor birth is asked; enquire at the House of the True. According to one's actions are caste and birth.

[Guru i. Prabhati.]

The man who performs good actions,
He is called a Deva [in this] world:

He who does evil deeds in this world,
Men call him an Asura [demon].
[Guru x. Vichitra Nāṭak.]

On karma, the teaching is very clear:
Soweth himself, eateth himself. [Guru i. Japaji.]

In the field of karma he reapeth whatever he soweth.
[Guru v. Baramah Majh.]

Let us not blame anyone,
Whatever we act that we enjoy (and suffer);
Karmas (actions) are ours, bondage is ours too,
Coming and going is the activity (business) of Māyā.
[Guru v.]

In many births [we] became insects and moths;
In many births [we] became elephants, fish, and deer;
In many births [we] became birds and serpents;
In many births [we] were yoked as steeds and bullocks;
Seek the Lord! It is the surer [opportunity] of seeking;
after long ages this [human] body has been attained.
Many lives [have we] wandered over mountains.
Many lives [have we] been miscarried from the womb.

Many lives [have we] been created as herbage.
We have been made to wander through eighty-four lakhs of wombs.
The association of the good hath let us attain [this] birth.
Serve thou devotedly, says Hari. This is the Guru's teaching.
If he cast off vanity, falsehood and pride
And die living, then is he accepted in [that] court [i.e., presence].
[Guru v. Gauri Rāg].

As iron placed on an anvil is beaten into shape,
So is deluded [or ignorant] soul thrown into wombs and made to wander, [so that] it may bend (or turn to the Right Path).
[Guru i. Suhi Rāg Kafi 4.]

Here is a beautiful description of the Jīvan-Mukta:
Who in his mind knows the Lord's will to be for the best,
He is verily called Jīvan-Mukta.
To him joy is the same as sorrow.
He is ever blissful; to him there is no separation.
Gold to him is the same as clay.
To him nectar is the same as bitter poison.
Honour and dishonour are the same to him.
The pauper and the king are equal for him.
Whatever is made to happen (by the Lord), that same [he considers] fit and proper.
O Nānak, such a man is called a Jīvan-Mukta.
[Guru v. Sukhmani.]

And here is a fine poem on the Brahmajnānī:

Brahmajnānī is ever unstained, like the lotus which is not wetted by water.
Brahmajnānī is ever free from fault (or evil), as the sun dries up all things;
Brahmajnānī looks upon every one equally, as wind touches the king and pauper alike.
Brahmajnānī suffers, endures all equally, as the earth dug by some and smeared with sandal by others.
Such is the quality of Brahmajnānī as the (burning) power of fire is innate.
Brahmajnānī is purer than the pure, as impurity touches not water.
In the mind of Brahmajnānī shines light, as the sky (shines) above earth.
To the Brahmajnānī friend and foe are equal, Brahmajnānī hath no pride.
Brahmajnānī is higher than the high, but he thinks himself lower than every one.
Those men become Brahmajnānī, O Nānak, whom the Lord Himself makes (such).
Brahmajnānī is the dust (of the feet) of every one; Brahmajnānī has gathered (or known) the essence of ātmā.
Brahmajnānī is compassionate to all; no evil cometh from the Brahmajnānī.
Brahmajnānī always looks upon all equally, on whatever he looks he showers nectar.
Brahmajnānī is free from bondage, Brahmajnānī's yoga is pure.
Brahmajnānī's food is wisdom; O Nānak, the meditation of Brahmajnānī is Brahmā.

Brahmajnānī [fixes his] hope on the One, Brahmajnānī doth never perish.
Brahmajnānī is pervaded by humility, Brahmajnānī delights in doing good to others.
Brahmajnānī is free from activity [of the three Gunas]. Brahmajnānī makes [his own mind] prisoner.
Whatever befalls a Brahmajnānī (he considers) it good, Divine qualities fructify in a Brahmajnānī.
Everything is uplifted along with a Brahmajnānī, O Nānak; the whole world repeats [the name of] the Brahmajnānī.
Brahmajnānī has one colour [state of the mind, i.e. Love]. The Lord dwells with the Brahmajnānī.
Brahmajnānī is supported by the name, to the Brahmajnānī the Name is his all in all.
Brahmajnānī is ever awake in the Real, Brahmajnānī relinquishes egoism.
In the heart of Brahmajnānī there is the highest bliss; in the Brahmajnānī's house there is ever peace.
Brahmajnānī dwells in happiness; O Nānak, there is no destruction for the Brahmajnānī.
Brahmajnānī is the knower of Brahmā; Brahmajnānī is ever in love with the One.
Brahmajnānī is free from anxiety, Brahmajnānī's belief is pure.
He is Brahmajnānī whom the Lord Himself makes [such]; the glory of the Brahmajnānī is great.
A very fortunate person may see [meet] a Brahmajnānī. We should offer ourselves as a sacrifice for (lit. go round) a Brahmajnānī.
Maheshvara (Shiva the great Lord) seeks a Brahmajnānī, O Nānak.

The Brahmajnānī is the Supreme Lord Himself.
The Brahmajnānī is a priceless treasure.
Everything is in the heart of Brahmajnānī, he who knows the secret of the Brahmajnānī.
Let us ever salute the Brahmajnānī; we could not pronounce half a letter of the Brahmajnānī.
Brahmajnānī is the Lord of all; who can measure in speech the Brahmajnānī!
A Brahmajnānī alone knows the Goal of the Brahmajnānī.
Of the Brahmajnānī there is neither limit nor the other shore. O Nānak, we ever salute the Brahmajnānī.
Brahmajnānī is the maker of all creation. Brahmajnānī is the giver of mukti, yoga and life.
Brahmajnānī is the whole Spirit (Purusha) and ordainer.
Brahmajnānī is the protector of the unprotected, Brahmajnānī guards every one.
All this is the form of Brahmjnānī. Brahmajnānī is the Formless [Supreme Self] Himself.
The splendour (or grace) of the Brahmajnānī befits a Brahmajnānī alone. Bramajnānī is the Treasure of all. [Guru v. Sukhmaṇi.]

He who causes no fear to others, and fears no one.
Say Nānak! hear O mind, call him Jñānī [wise].
[Guru ix.]

Here are some slokas on devotion to the Gurudeva:

O Nānak! know that to be the true Guru who unites (thee) with all, my dear. [Guru i. Sri Rāg.]

Every day a hundred times would [I] sacrifice [myself] unto [my] own Guru;
Who transformed me into God, and it did not take him long to do so.

[Guru i. Vara Asā]

If a hundred moons and a thousand suns were to rise,
And there were so much light, without Guru there would be (still) awful darkness.

[Guru ii. Āsavara.]

Blessed by my true Guru, knower of Hari,
Who showed us friend and foe equal in our sight.

[Guru iv. Vara Vadhans.]

Gurudeva is mother, Gurudeva is father, Gurudeva is the Supreme Lord;
Gurudeva is friend, destroyer of ignorance, Gurudeva is relative and real brother;
Gurudeva is the giver and teacher of Hari's name;
Gurudeva has realized the mantra;
Gurudeva is the embodiment of peace, truth and enlightenment; Gurudeva's touch is higher than that of the philosopher's stone.
Gurudeva is the Tīrtha (place of pilgrimage), the tank of nectar (immortality), there is nothing beyond immersion in Guru's knowledge.

Gurudeva the maker is the destroyer of all evil.
Gurudeva is the purifier of all fallen ones.
Gurudeva is primal, before ages, in every age; by repeating his Hari-Mantra [we] are saved (lit. uplifted from the ocean of Samsāra)
O Lord, favour us with Gurudeva's company, so that linked (attached) to him we deluded sinners may swim (across).
Gurudeva, the true Guru, is Parabrahman, Supreme Lord; Nānak bows to Gurudeva Hari.

[Guru v. Bavanakhhri.]

O mother! I rejoice, for I have found the true Guru.

[Guru iii. Rāmkali.]

Let him fix the Guru's word in his heart.
And cease to associate with the five persons (desire, wrath, etc.)
Keep the ten organs under control.
Then in his self the light shall shine forth.

[Guru v. Gauri.]

To conclude these perhaps too numerous quotations, I will give some miscellaneous ones, full of beauty:

Think thou on the great qualities of the true Name at the ambrosial time (morning).

[Guru i. Japa.]

Even if we rub and scrub our body with water, still,
O Brother! it is impure;
Let us bathe in the mighty waters of knowledge, O
Brother! so that the mind and body be purified.
[Guru i. Sorath.]

O heart! Love Hari as the lotus loves the waters;
It is buffeted by waves, but (the petals of) its love
unfold.
[Guru i. Sri Rāga.]

I forgot all distinctions (lit. anotherness, or I forgot
altogether who was another),
Since I obtained the company of the good;
There was no enemy, no alien, I made peace with
every one.
[Guru v. Kānara.]

All beings are His, He belongs to all beings.
Whom can we revile [or say he is low]? If there were
another [we might do so].
[Guru iii. Āsa.]

Pause for one moment on the thought that if there is but one Self in all, where is there room for hatred? If there be but one Hari in all, where is the room for contempt? If there were more than One, if there were not One without a second, then might man be different from man and might quarrel with his brother; but if the same God abides in every heart, if the same Self animates every vehicle, where is the room for hatred or contempt? There is but One in all.

O Nānak, repeat Soham, Hamsa; by this repetition
the three worlds are absorbed in Him.
[Guru i. Var Mārū.]

Call them not pure who wash their bodies and sit,
O Nānak! Those alone are pure in whose heart He dwells.
[Guru i. Var Āsa.]

Those who practised contentment, they meditated on the true One.
They placed not their foot into evil, they did good deeds and earned virtue.
[Guru i. Āsa.]

He is Sannyāsī who serves the true Guru and removes the self from within;
Desires neither covering, nor food, takes what comes [to him] without thinking [or unasked].
[Guru i. Mārū Rāga.]

Few attain Guru's favour and are centred in the fourth state. [Guru iii. Majh.]

Of the things to be renounced, the most to be renounced are lust, hatred and avarice.

Hear thou! meditating on Hari's name do charity to all.

Without practising virtue, devotion is not possible. [Guru i. Japa.]

In thy own home and palace find innate bliss; (thus) thou again shalt not return. (Guru v. Gauri.)

O mind! practise such sannyās (renunciation): consider all abodes as forest, remaining unaffected, at heart; keep the matted locks of self-control, do the ablution of yoga, grow nails of niyama (five observances).

Make [Divine] knowledge thy Guru, and teach thyself.

Besmear [yourself with] the ashes of the Name;

Let the love [good] of thy body [consist in] eating little, little sleep, compassion, forgiveness.

Practise good disposition, contentment, transcend the three Gunas.
Do not let lust, anger, pride, avarice, obstinacy, deluded clinging (conquer you).
Then will you behold the reality (essence) of the Self and you will attain to the Supreme Spirit.

[Guru x. Shabd Hazare.]

Delay not in good; delay in evil.

[Guru v.]

Countless are the slanderers [that] burden themselves [with the sin of calumny].
If thou seekest thy own good, then do good, and let them call thee lowly.

[Guru i. Āsa.]

Weighed in the balance, he who bends down is precious.

[Guru i. Suhi]

I am not good; none else is bad.

[Guru i. Suhi.]

If one becomes a slave of slaves, and casts out the self, then he finds Hari.

[Guru iii.]

As a fish cannot live without water,
As a cuckoo cannot be satisfied without the raindrop,
As a deer [pierced, touched or enamoured] by the sound [of a gong] runs towards it,

As a black bee, thirsting for the scent of a flower, finding it, gets himself imprisoned,
So the saints love God and are satisfied by seeing [Him]
[Guru v. Jaitsari].
There are none who do not wrangle and oppose;
Show them to me and I will praise them.
[Guru i. Mārā.]

The devotees and worldly men seldom agree.
[Guru i. Majh.]

By the Guru's favour, practice Rāja Yoga.
There are few who annihilate duality (sense of separation) and having destroyed it practice Rāja Yoga.
[Guru v. Gauri.]

He to whose eyes the collyrium of [Divine] Knowledge has been applied, he beholds all [as] splendour.
In the darkness of ignorance he sees not, and wanders again and again (in rebirth).
[Guru v. Sorāth.]

I sought Him in the ten quarters, I found Him in the house;
I met Him, when the true Guru brought me face to face with Him.
[Guru i. Omkār.]

The delusion of whose breast (heart) is gone,
Hindu and Musalmān are the same before him.

[Guru x.]

One has become a shriven Sannyāsī, and another a Yogī, a Brahmachāri, a Yati, is considered; a Hindu, a Turk (Musalman), a Rafazi, Imāmshafi. But understand thou that humanity is one. The Maker, the Compassionate, is the same, the Nourisher, and the Kind One is the same; fall not into the error and delusion of the difference of duality, One is to be served; the Gurudeva of all is one; one is the Nature and know thou the Light to be one. The temple and the mosque are the same, Pūja and Nimāz [muslim prayer] are one, all men are one, but many in manifestation; so Gods and demons are one, Yakshas and Gandharvas. Hindus and Turks are due to the different nature of the garbs of various lands. The eyes, the ears, the body, the make is one, a combination of earth, air, fire, water; the signless Allah is the same; Purānas and Qurān are the same; one is the nature and one is the make.

As from one fire a crore of sparks arise, and becoming separate merge again into the [same] fire; as from one [heap of] dust many particles fill (the sky) and these particles again disappear in the same dust; as in one river many ripples are formed, but these ripples of water are called but water; so from the Universal Form conscious and unconscious beings have manifested, but they shall lose themselves into That from which they have come. [Guru x. Kavitu.]

Surely there is nothing in all these to which the heart of every one of us cannot answer, which the heart of every one of us cannot echo, only longing that we had the same passion and devotion and only longing that our devotion might be as clear as his.

Such is the teaching and such is the heart of Sikhism. Is there anything in it which can serve but to bind together, to draw hearts close each to each, to bind men together in love? When you think of Guru Nānak, think of one of those great Prophets of peace, who, from supreme love to God, would draw the blessed fruit of love to men; and then you will see that the Sikh brothers are helpers in the building up of the one nation out of India with no quarrel against any, with no hatred against any, with no strife to divide them from any other faith. If they are faithful to the teachings of their Guru, they should be friends and unifiers wherever they go, builders-up and constructors of the national life. We should not be far wrong if we said that in this religion of pure Bhakti, of love of God and man, we have one of the forerunners of that ancient Divine Wisdom, which, in these later days, the great Lodge has given to man; for here too is a unifier, a friend and a brother, here too is a lover and a joiner of those who are rivals. When we speak the name of Guru Nānak, we speak the name of peace, and may He who watches over his own community make it one of the elements for the building of India.

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